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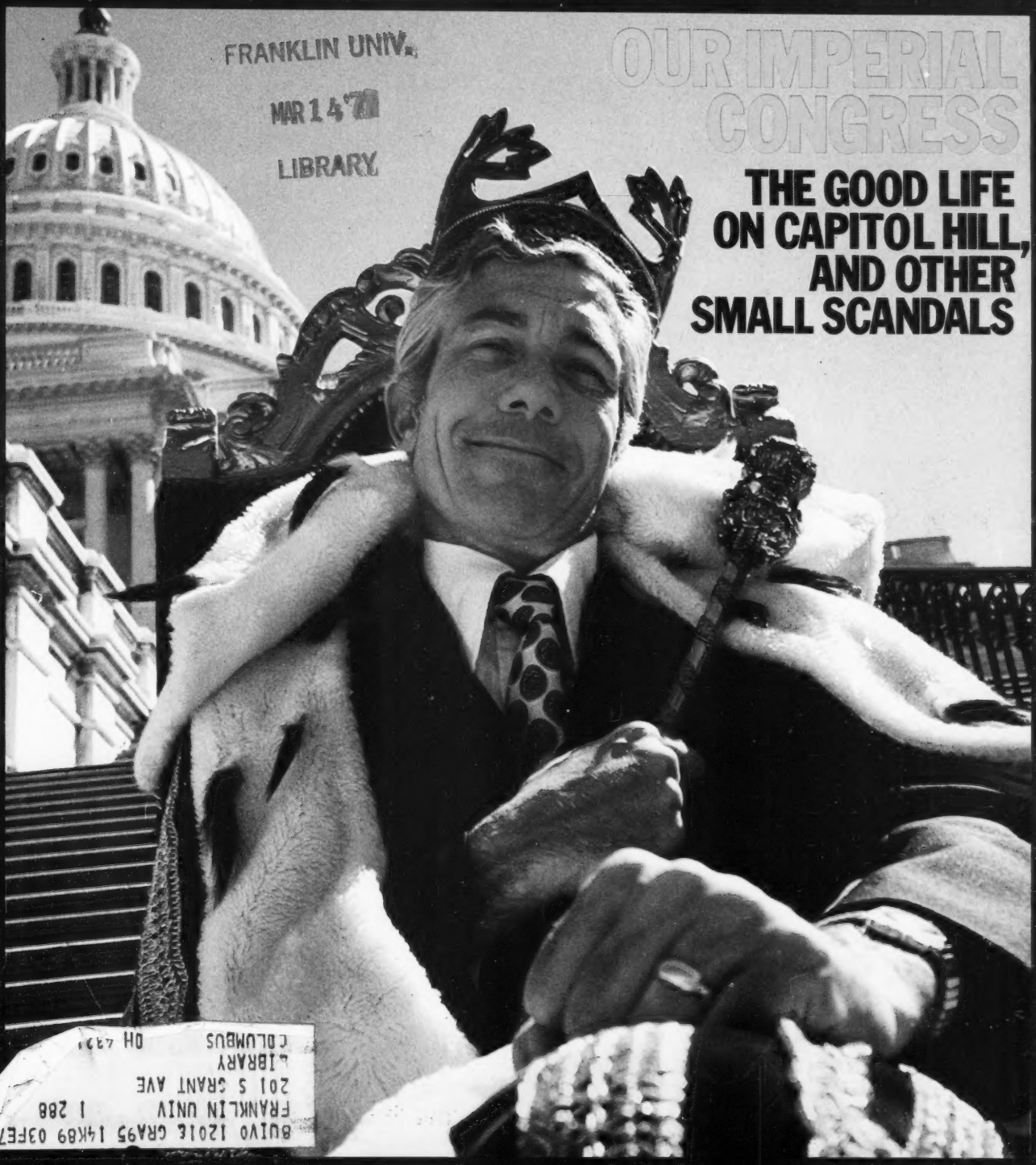

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(Pronounced Do-ers "White Label")

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SUSAN SILVER

HOME: New York, New York

AGE: 33

PROFESSION: Television writer

HOBBIES: Reading, tennis.

MOST MEMORABLE BOOK: "The Diary of Anais Nin"

LAST ACCOMPLISHMENT: Just completed work on her first feature film assignment.

QUOTE: "Much of the successful comedy on television is now being written by women. It's not that our view is better or worse . . . it's just different. And the ratings prove that the difference is being appreciated."

PROFILE: Honest, determined, intelligent. A "high voltage" personality.

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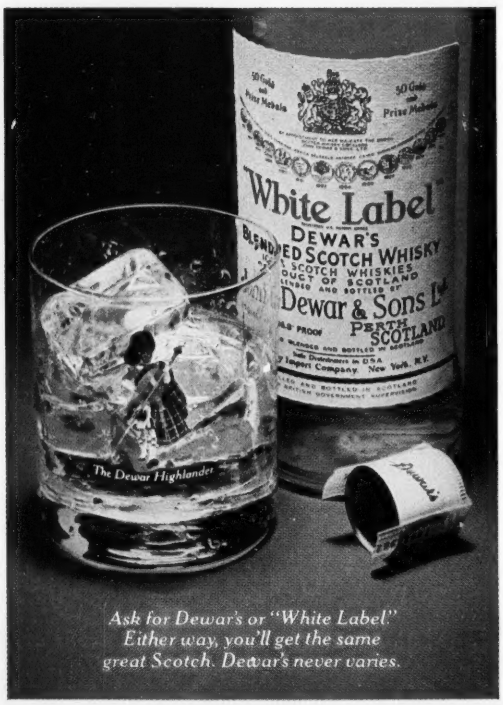

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That's the blissful simplicity of a fully automatic turntable.

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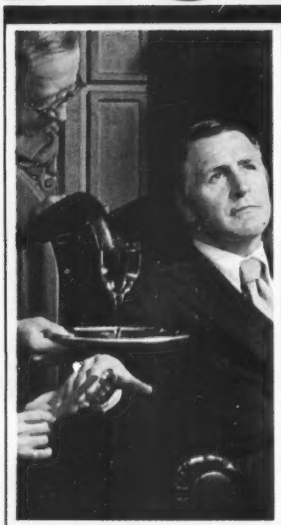
New Times



The imperial Congress

Living swell is the best revenge for the members of the United States Congress, who get fed, shampooed, bathed, and generally coddled at public expense. As one congressman says, "We've all been dipped in warm honey. . . ."

By Robert Shrum

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Smoke city

The boys of House Springs, Missouri, who used to inhale 3.2 beer, inhale something stronger now. They're drawing on their joints like they were Luckies.

By Michael Wolff

Page 36

New hope for the dead

If you didn't like the way you were born the first time, try it again. Instead of mommy, bring a snorkel.

By Jesse Kornbluth

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Grace on the cutting room floor

The surgeons of the subliminal are the film editors whose work with a scalpel and movieola won an Oscar for Gary Cooper's hernia operation.

By Geraldine Fabrikant

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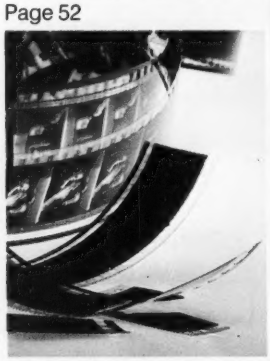

Party Lines
Like swallows to Capistrano, the military hawks return to greet each new president.
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Why Chinese quakes don't rock our sensibilities.
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COVER
PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE PHILLIPS

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Battle of Gettysburg, by Thomas Nast

Party Lines

Megadeath politics/By Robert Shrum

When Jimmy Carter, Harold Brown and Cyrus Vance conferred with congressional leaders at the Smithsonian castle a week before the inauguration, they heard a chorus of alarms about the Soviet threat. Carter had come a long way; and so had public opinion, from the day in the spring of 1975 when pollster Pat Caddell dispatched a copy of the quarterly *Cambridge Report* to Jerry Rafshoon, the long-shot candidate's media consultant. That report counted 49 percent of Americans viewing the defense budget as "full of waste and fat"; only 20 percent wanted to spend more. Carter subsequently advocated a $15 billion cut, then a lesser one of 5 to 7 percent, and the cancellation of the B-1 bomber. Almost as much as his black support, this position certified his *bona fides* to liberal doubters in the Democratic party.

MOVIE STAR NEWS

Stranger than *Strangelove*: How to start worrying and love the bomb

But then came the latest Soviet scare. Such scares recur with a convenient periodicity: they traditionally coincide with a new presidency. In the early 1950s, there was a "bomber gap" that turned out to be nonexistent. The "missile gap" elected John Kennedy, whose secretary of defense soon admitted that it, too, was mythical. In 1968, Nixon imagined a "naval gap"; so the United States caught up in a race it already led, and today American naval tonnage is almost twice that of the Soviet Union. "The military lobby," says one of its rare critics on the Senate Armed Services staff, "will manufacture a gap whenever necessary."

At the center of the latest gap-making stands the Committee on the Present Danger. The name sounds like a parody of Allen Drury's most paranoid fictions. But this right-wing version is an amply financed, carefully orchestrated, very real effort from the men who brought us the Vietnam War to bring us back to the Cold War. The members include Dean Rusk, Maxwell Taylor, John Connally and William Colby. Labor unions have funded a substantial part of the committee's budget, and AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Lane Kirkland serves as cochairman. Symbolically balancing the representation of economic interests, businessman and former Nixon Defense Undersecretary David Packard is both a cochairman and a major contributor. For him, as for the unions, the money is an investment: the dividend of patriotism will be profits and jobs.

Yale law professor and Vietnam policymaker Eugene Rostow described the structure and strategy of the Present Danger group in a May 17, 1976, letter to James Schlesinger, who, though he never joined for political reasons, supported the project from the beginning. The announcement of the committee, Rostow wrote, would be timed for maximum impact. Until then, committee members could do the work privately. He enclosed a packet for Schlesinger "to pass on to Governor Reagan, perhaps with your own outline of a possible speech" on the Russian menace. Rostow himself was "urging some of the Democrats to speak out." Paul Nitze, a past Navy secretary now closely associated with the group, was counseling Jimmy Carter. And Schlesinger, Reagan's man in May, became a Carter coach for the October foreign policy debate, in which Carter, the one-time military budget cutter, assailed Ford's weakness on national security.

When the Committee on the Present Danger finally went public last November, the climate was right for a Russian scare. Paul Nitze had just served on a CIA panel to evaluate the Soviet-American balance. He shared the panel's report with committee associates who handed it on to sympathetic journalists, in particular Evans and Novak. Such CIA reports were shovels to dig the newest security gap—and not just a single gap, as in the past, but a simultaneous double gap of dollars and throw-weight.

The dollar gap is the difference between the Soviet and American defense budgets: this January, the CIA figured that the Russians were spending 40 percent more. A Carter Administration expert regards the comparison as "silly—it's easy to talk rubles and dollars, but they may be apples and oranges." He points to the technical inferiority of Soviet industry: "They have to pay more to get less." Even the CIA cautioned that "estimates" of Russian expenditures suffer "a margin of error which could be substantial for some items."

The other half of the double gap is throw-weight: Russian missiles carry heavier payloads. But in fact, explains a dissident ex-Pentagon planner, "their missiles have to. A heavier warhead is their inefficient way of compensating for inaccuracy. Accuracy is what's critical, and we're far ahead there."

The gap-makers talk as though numbers mattered for their own sake. "But the relevant question," insists George McGovern, "is not whether our spending or forces are superior or even equal, but are they sufficient to deter an attack?" Today the United States possesses a strategic arsenal of 9,000 deliverable warheads—or 41 hydrogen bombs for each of the 219 Soviet cities with a population over 100,000. Since 1972, the U.S. has

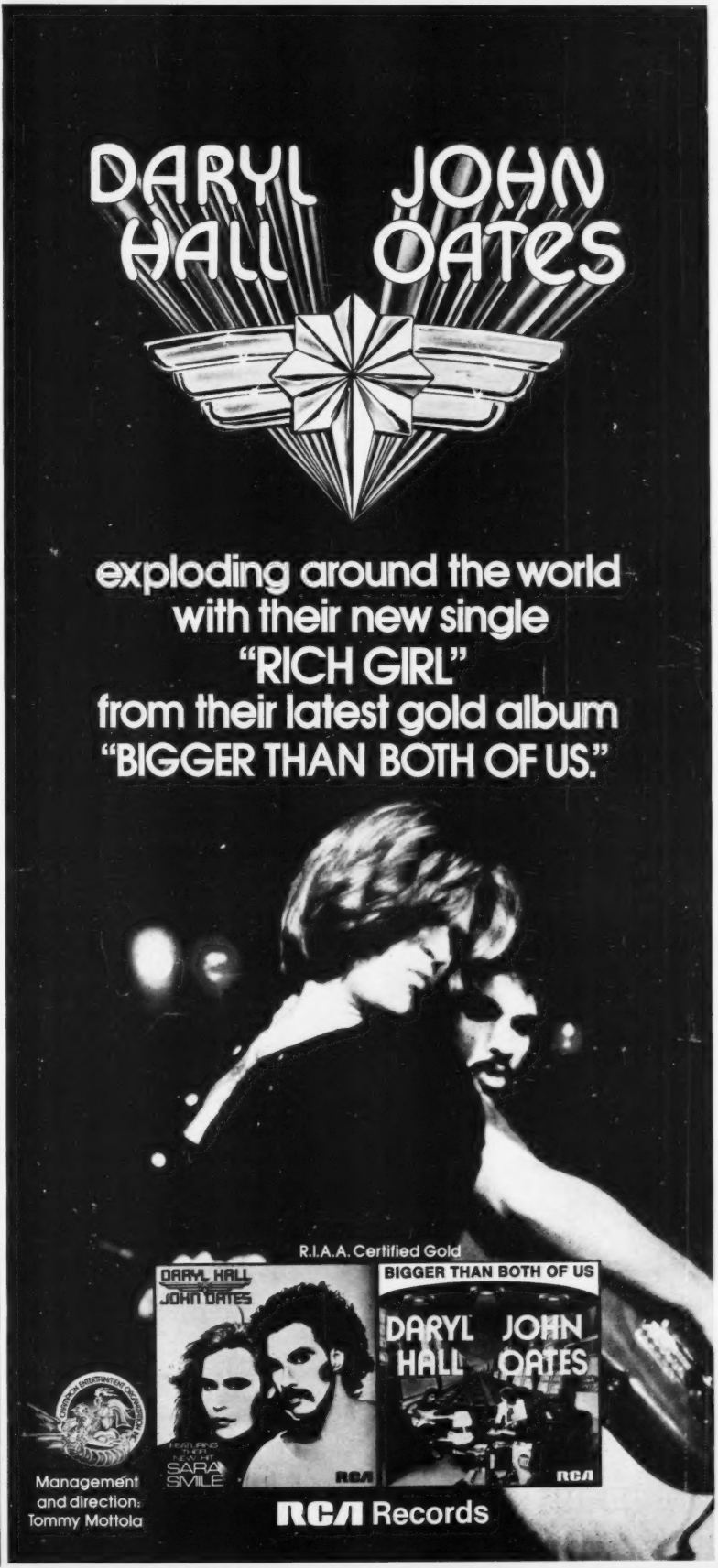
added 4,500 warheads, the Russians 1,500.

These forces sustain a policy that the McNamara Pentagon named "massive assured destruction," aptly acronymed MAD in a world that daily hazards self-holocaust. If all American land-based forces were wiped out, submarines alone could overkill Soviet cities 22 times.

The sufficiency is so absolute that the gap-makers had to devise another way to score the game. James Schlesinger set forth the Strangelovian rules when he was Nixon's defense secretary in 1974. The Russians, he argued, might adopt a counterforce strategy, hitting land-based ICBMs instead of population centers, then blackmailing the United States because our remaining forces, though still sufficient to retaliate, would be outnumbered clearly. Would the President, wondered Schlesinger and his successor Donald Rumsfeld, order retaliation, setting off a full-scale war, when the casualties from a Soviet counterforce attack would total "only" 800,000? The casualty figure, of course, was the essential assumption. The congressional Office of Technology Assessment, after an independent study, raised the projection to at least 3 million dead and perhaps as many as 22 million, with millions more wounded and irradiated, thereby shattering the fragile basis of this madder than MAD scenario.

American strategists invented counterforce and then ascribed it to the Soviet Union. "It's a purely abstract possibility," says one official who has seen the intelligence reports. "There's no evidence the Russians ever thought of it before we did." The proof the counterforce-mongers offer that the Russians are contemplating nuclear war is the Soviet civil defense program. But the cost of that program comes to $4 per Russian per year, the average for European countries. Prudently and logically, the system may be designed for protection in the event of a limited Chinese strike. It is especially incompatible with counterforce. The Soviets *could* evacuate their cities, but it would take at least three days, conceded Boeing expert T.K. Jones in recent Senate testimony. What would the Kremlin say on the hotline to explain those three days, McGovern asks—"that the whole country had been given a vacation at the same time?"

Last year, Henry Kissinger complained to a closed Senate Foreign Relations Committee meeting that some people in the Pentagon were "crazy": they were determined to construct all weapons to maximum technological feasibility. A former U.S.



delegate to the Geneva disarmament conference thinks "there would be no particular difficulty in negotiating comprehensive arms limits with the Russians. The roadblock is the Pentagon analysts. Most of them just don't want an agreement." One of those analysts recently told an Eastern senator: "You misperceive the purpose of SALT. The ideal agreement would be to let us build everything, while they disarm unilaterally." At the endpoint of this line of thought are the extremists who, if they do not exactly want it, expect and accept a nuclear war and believe that in it there is such a thing as victory. In a letter last June, Eugene Rostow wrote: "I fully agree . . . that we are living in a pre-war and not a post-war world."

But such analysts would scare the nation more about themselves than the Russians if they propagated their dark faith very widely. Other sectors of what President Eisenhower called "the military-industrial complex" exert more of its "unwarranted influence in the councils of government."

Defense contractors maintain large planning groups to invent successors to current weapons systems. Rockwell International (previously North American Aviation) followed the B-25 with the B-45, then the B-70, which McNamara cancelled—and now the B-1. Rockwell's lobbying office in Washington has a 40-person staff. The economic pressure has mounted, says Colorado Senator Gary Hart, who sits and often dissents on the Armed Services Committee, "as Rockwell has seeded B-1 subcontracts in virtually every congressional district."

And the coalition of vested interests exceeds Eisenhower's description. It is a military-industrial-*labor* complex. Conservatives naturally side with the defense theorists and business; the unions can corral liberals. When John Tunney and Alan Cranston voted for the B-1 in the Senate, Cranston privately apologized to a colleague that labor made them do it: thousands of jobs in California were at stake. The United Auto Workers persuaded then Senator Mondale to switch sides on the B-1. A UAW official in Los Angeles argues: "So maybe we don't need it for defense. We do need the work. After they build them, I don't care if they dump them in the Pacific Ocean." Every year since 1963, McGovern has introduced a bill to prepare an orderly conversion of weapons production to alternative purposes. "Most of the unions," he recalls, "have opposed it. They can't be absolutely sure they will do quite as well. If peace broke out tomorrow, so would a second great depression."

In today's atmosphere, comments an administration official, "the McGoverns and the Kennedys are considered extremists. The rational people are the ones who favored counter-insurgency, Vietnam and the ABM." Paul Nitze is practical: he drafted NSC memorandum 38, urging a cold war hardline on President Truman; he coauthored the Gaither Report, which invented the missile gap. But Paul Warnke, Carter's choice for Director of Arms Control and Disarmament and SALT negotiator, is a crackpot: at the Pentagon, from 1966 to 1968, he argued for de-escalation in Vietnam, and he has characterized the arms race as "mindless."

To secure his confirmation, Warnke has hedged his views, agreeing that maybe numbers alone—of missiles, bombers, dollars and rubles—do matter. "He doesn't mean it," a friend claims, "but in this climate, he has to say it." Carter has backed Warnke as clearly as he backed away from Sorensen. One of the President's closest associates

One Pentagon analyst says: "You misperceive the purpose of SALT. The ideal agreement would be to let us build everything, while they disarm unilaterally"

reports: "Jimmy really does mean it on arms control. He's determined to get a SALT agreement soon—one that effectively limits nuclear weapons."

"The President," says a Senate Democrat, "could turn this whole mood of fear around. He has the presumption of wisdom. He could reverse the trend of defense budget inflation." Characteristically, Carter is trying to split the difference. He seems likely to pursue strategic arms control despite the military ideologues. But to compensate the corporations and unions, a high administration official confirms, Carter will substitute higher spending on conventional forces. At the Smithsonian gathering, the President and Secretary Brown explicitly seconded the congressional expressions of concern about Soviet conventional strength. "No one asked," one participant remembers, "why we need the same size army as the Russians. They have a 4,000-mile border with China and restless satellites in Eastern Europe. We have a border with Canada."

Whether the work is tanks for NATO or nuclear missiles obviously matters little to the UAW official who would just as soon see the B-1 assembly line terminate with a slide into the Pacific. In fact, the administration appears to conceive of the B-1 as virtually a conventional weapon. Secretary Brown told a senator in January that it would not affect the strategic balance—then hinted that while approving the production of a few B-1's this year, he might eventually authorize 100 of the planes. The cost of that quasi-conventional substitute for strategic spending may top $30 billion. The figure reflects the inevitable result of a split policy of strategic restraint and conventional increases. New priorities would continue to be an old cliché. Newark might not be blown up in a nuclear conflict, but its slums would continue to look like Dresden after the fire bombing.

Carter's pollster Caddell senses in the latest defense scare not just the normal complex of self-interest, but a national complex of self-doubt. He compares it to C. Vann Woodward's description of "the burden of southern history": defeated in the Civil War, the South became the most defensive and chauvinistic region of the nation; defeated in an Asian war, Americans in general, and particularly the experts who blundered into Vietnam, have an intensified need to be tough. The minimum price of this psychological impulse, it appears, will be billions more for conventional arms instead of for housing, health and the cities. And the highest price? If Carter falters or fails on arms control, Gary Hart says starkly, "the logical conclusion will be nuclear war." A senior American diplomat thinks it may be too late already. "I am happy to be an old man," he says, "so I can die a natural death."

The technical terms of the debate, the cold jargon and the number games, the calculations in which 800,000 dead are dismissed as an "only," tend to mute our sense of how bad the worst would be. The National Academy of Sciences has assessed the consequences of detonating just half of the American and Soviet warheads now on station. Some human beings would survive—in the southern hemisphere. But the depletion of the ozone layer would be global, blighting crops to the point of famine, spreading a plague of skin cancer. Actually there would be some life in the northern hemisphere, too, after one of Herman Kahn's thinkable nuclear wars. For one life form is resistant to radiation: the bugs would multiply and inherit half the earth. ●

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Slow Down

Death in China/By James S. Kunen

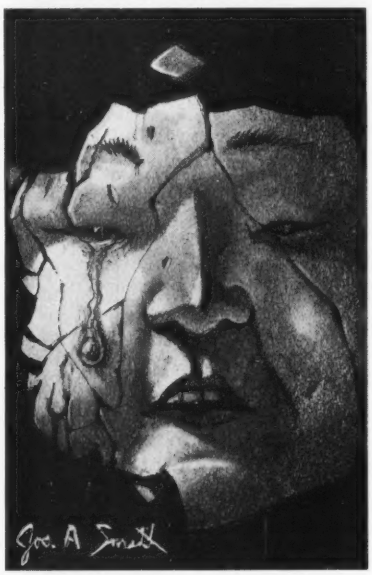
Did you know that 655,000 Chinese people died in the Tangshan earthquake last July? The number of casualties was not known in the West until January, and was scarcely reported then. I happened to come across the figure in an article on earthquake prediction on page 83 of the January 24 issue of *Time*, just below a picture from the movie *Earthquake*. I also heard it mentioned in passing on a network news show. Not since 820,000 people were killed in northern China in 1556 had there been an earthquake so devastating. But there were no banner headlines in American papers, no cover stories, no special documentaries. One editor explained to me that the figure might not be reliable because it was released not by the Chinese government but by Nationalist Chinese intelligence.

In fact, the scope of the disaster has been established. Reuters quoted Peking sources as saying that the quake killed 700,000. And the Chinese government has not denied the authenticity of the Nationalist report; official statements tend to support it. A recent charge against the "Gang of Four"—the purged radicals Mme. Mao, Wang, Chang and Yao—accused them of saying, "What does it matter if Tangshan, with a population of 1 million, was erased from the globe?" (I wonder, had the earthquake gone completely unreported here, whether we could have been totally unaware of the annihilation of 655,000 human beings, or whether a shock wave of pain and loss would have traveled around the world from the epicenter of death, so that some feeling would have overtaken us, though we thought it came from within ourselves? But I am talking now about news reports.)

Had a quake devastated London, even if figures weren't official and there was nothing we could do, attention would have been paid. It must be our failure to recognize the humanity of the Chinese that causes the lack of feeling here for the horror there.

The 900 million people of China are not from another planet. In fact, if visitors from another planet wanted to take back *typical* human beings, they would take Asians, not exotic hybrids from the outlying regions of the globe. Most people are Asians.

But if we are ready to concede that a resident of China feels pain when a brick wall falls on him and traps him in darkness and crushes and suffocates and bleeds him to death, impenetrable inches away from his family, what are we to make of a story such as this one, in the Chinese Communist party's *People's Daily*: "Che Chen-ming . . . had just escaped from his collapsed house . . . when he heard his son, 16, and his daughter, 13, calling from under the debris, 'Father, come quickly, save me.' As he was about to rush to the aid of his children, Che Chen-ming suddenly heard a shout for help from Chiu Kuang-yu, party secretary of Lupei District . . . . The earth was still shaking. Time meant life. At this most critical moment what should a Communist do? Che



Chen-ming determinedly said to his wife: 'First I'm going to save Chiu'. . . . When Che Chen-ming returned to his home his two children were dead. He had no regrets, nor did he grieve or lose heart. For the people of the entire district and for the interests of the majority, he did not balk at sacrificing his own children. This was the noble ideological world of Che Chen-ming. . . ."

And how can we understand the relentless, seemingly nonsensical use of political rhetoric in official Chinese statements about the quake, as when Premier Hua Kuo-feng told relief workers: "The people in the afflicted area are deepening the criticism of Teng Hsiao-ping's counter-revolutionary revisionist line in connection with concrete work, turning the anti-quake struggle and relief work into a battle to criticize Teng Hsiao-ping."

And why does China refuse all outside help, even shooting down, into the sea, balloons laden with relief supplies sent from Quemoy by the Nationalist Chinese?

Roy Hofheinz Jr., professor of government at Harvard's East Asian Research Center, speculates that the Chinese people have not actually accepted the idea that it's good to sacrifice one's family to save the local cadre, else such hortatory stories would not be run all the time in the official press. In any case, we in the West put a value on sacrificing one's own interests for the greater good. "It's just that we would never think of saving a bureaucrat as benefiting society. But in the Chinese view, he's a servant of the people. The motive is the same."

Nor is the linking of the quake with ideological battles incomprehensible. Teng Hsiao-ping, the former vice-premier who was ousted last April, had favored increased trade with the West, which some of the leadership deemed detrimental to China's self-reliance. The loss of production and need for supplies engendered by the earthquake sharpens the issue. Moreover, language in China is so saturated with slogans, according to Professor Hofheinz, that to the Chinese man on the street Premier Hua's statement about Teng may simply translate to "The people are doing a good job."

As for the rejection of foreign aid, Hofheinz explains that "the Chinese maintain a fortress mentality. In the past, missionaries were, in the Chinese view, bearers of poison into the body politic."

They were. In the 19th century, missionaries plied the China coast aboard merchant ships that were smuggling in opium. When China tried to stop the import of this "foreign mud," she was attacked and effectively occupied for a century. "The barbarian nature cannot be fathomed," a Chinese official wrote of the Westerners in the 1840s. "It is treacherous and deceitful. There is none who does not look only for profit."

"The question is," Hofheinz says, "are the Chinese right in their views of the outside world? Is there no sincerity? I think they're wrong. We've got to convince them."

To begin, we could try to understand this: 655,000 people died in China. ●

Letters

Wait till the *next* issue

I'm amazed. I just received my first issue of *New Times* today. Relevant?!! Hell, it was eerie!! First, I read Richard Levine's article on Laetrile (I work for two cancer specialists). Then I read Ken Tucker's piece on Boston (I happened to be listening to their album at the time). Then the article in The Insider on the assassination committee (I'm sure I've read nearly every book on the subject). I finally went back and read everything I had skipped. In one afternoon, I felt more informed than I've ever felt during readings of the last eight weeks of *Time* magazine. Thank you.

David Falkowitz
Fresno, California

Eclectic music

After recently purchasing the album *Boston* by the group of the same name, and having read the piece by Ken Tucker ("Boston and the new rock myth," February 18), I'd like to comment on Tucker's statement, "This is music with something for everyone. . . ." Perhaps this is because of Boston's ability to sound like other groups. One song reminds me of the Doobie Brothers. Another sounds like it came off an Emerson Lake & Palmer album, and still another sounds like Grand Funk Railroad.

This is not to say there is anything wrong with the album; on the contrary, Boston offers more of what made the other groups so successful. Good luck to Scholz and company. Maybe Polaroid should have kept him on and started a record-producing division.

Jim Crowley
Mason, Michigan

Get back

So the record companies are interested in capturing (or recapturing, as the case may be) the older market of potential record buyers, eh ("What if they gave a concert and nobody came," February 18)? Have they considered the possibility that maybe it's the late seventies garbage purporting itself to be music that's the problem? That maybe all those "baby boomers" who bought records in the sixties have stopped because so has the really exciting, relevant, innovative music that embodied and enriched that decade.

Maybe one can't bring the Beatles back together again, but how much marketing sense does it take to realize that when you go from *Sgt. Pepper* to "Disco Duck," you're going to lose a lot of your audience? When the quality goes back into the music, I'll go back to the record stores.

Rena Shulsky
Boston, Massachusetts

Old rockers don't die, nor do they fade away from concerts or record shops. They just get married and are more concerned with paying the rent than keeping their record libraries up to date. Besides, a basic AM/FM receiver doesn't take up as much room as one with a turntable or tape player. And what about those albums and tapes?

Larry Clark
Savannah, Missouri

Attention gotten

I applaud *New Times* and Robert Palmer for the article "New jazz" (February 18). It is about time these most creative and inspired musicians received some attention from the national news media. We should all be thankful that they all keep making music despite the tremendous hassles they've had to go through just to play some honest sounds. And as a musician, I truly appreciate their situation.

Skooter Fein
Encino, California

Building symbols

Robert Shrum was correct in saying that Jimmy Carter is still only a symbol to the American people ("Party Lines," February 18). I, too, would like to see the substance behind the symbol; but I doubt we'll like what we see once it emerges, unless we also stand up and—finally—tell Mr. Carter that we want to build better hospitals, schools, day-care facilities, etc. for peace—and not to build more weapons of war.

Debbie King-Shimkoski
Northampton, Massachusetts

Pitted

Being a charter subscriber to *New Times* I have read many articles over the years; good, fair and poor. However, I have never before been as disappointed as I was after reading Richard Levine's "The Great Apricot Pit War." I felt Levine's bias from the very beginning. The real issue surrounding Laetrile was never mentioned: Does the all-powerful state have the right to ban importation and use of a drug which (literally) thousands of researchers, M.D.'s and lay people believe helps cancer victims? Sloan-Kettering and the National Cancer Institute are essentially publicly financed institutions, and the reaching of a cure (their "goal") would mean the death of those organizations as institutions (and of the anti-Laetrile researchers' jobs as well). We are one of the few countries in the world that do not allow the use of Laetrile in cancer therapy, and yet we have one of the highest cancer rates in the world. Shouldn't patients at least be allowed to try?

Charles W. Bates
East Lansing, Michigan

Jane's bodily functions

I'm mildly put off by the manner in which Richard Corliss discards the politics of *Fun With Dick and Jane* (February 18). Although the movie is somewhat superficial, it is noteworthy that 1. there is sympathy for those oppressed by the welfare system; 2. Dick gets blasted for his racist, sexist and anti-gay attitudes; and 3. they do, after all, rip off the Lockheed-like company.

I'm more put off by your comment about "Jane . . . nonchalantly pulling up her pop-art panties after making peepee (honest!)." I don't recall that Corliss showed similar incredulity over Sean Connery fumbling for his penis in *Robin and Marian*. Was Jane too nonchalant? Should George have been flustered at learning that his wife urinates? Should Jane wear white panties? Perhaps the problem is that Jane doesn't in fact "make peepee," rather she goes to the bathroom. Why do reviewers find the bodily functions of women more noteworthy than those of men?

Paul Westbrook
Ithaca, New York

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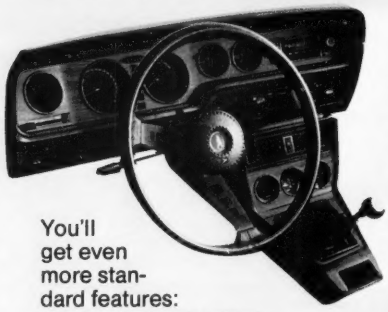

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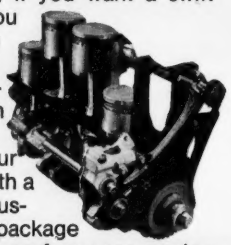

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The Insider

Health food highs/Carter courts the court . . . sort of

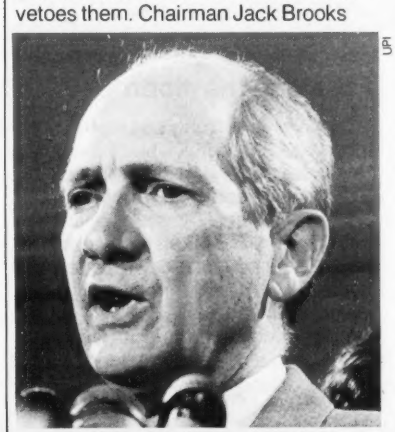
Politics

Guess who's coming to dinner

It wasn't quite a blue jean affair but. . . . Some weeks back, in an apparent attempt to get to know the other co-equal branches of government, President Carter invited the whole Supreme Court, and their wives, to dinner at the White House—informal. The justices showed up promptly at 6:30, were served dinner at 7, with the Carters at one table and the Mondales at another. Mid-dinner, the Carters and Mondales switched. Then, at 8:30, just when his guests were settling back, Carter took Rosalynn's hand, went to the door, and said that it had been lovely having them all, but he and his wife had to go downstairs to the movie room. "Perhaps you'll be interested in what we're going to do," he offered. "We're having the president of Mexico here for a state dinner in a few days, and Rosalynn and I have never been to a state dinner, so we're going to look at movies of past state dinners to see how it's done."

Artful dodgers

Academics are always willing to air their opinions—or, almost always. It seems that the House Government Operations Committee is having some trouble finding constitutional scholars to testify against a provision in Carter's reorganization bill, which calls for presidential plans to go into effect unless either the Senate or the House vetoes them. Chairman Jack Brooks prefers a requirement for positive approval by both houses and regards Carter's suggested procedure as unconstitutional. So, say committee staff members, do potential witnesses. The rub: a general reluctance by these scholars to offend an administration which just might offer them prestigious positions. Stanford professor Gerald Gunther, for example, begged off, saying, "I haven't really decided to go public on this yet."



UPI

Brooks: Who'll bear witness?

In fact, the only major scholar to agree to go public for the committee so far is Harvard constitutional expert Laurence Tribe, who has reason to be sensitive about executive excesses: his home and office phones were tapped and he was visited by the FBI after opposing several of Nixon's Supreme Court nominees.

Gamesmanship

In his new book, *The Gamesman*, psychoanalyst Michael Maccoby praises Sidney Harman as an enlightened capitalist for experimenting with worker control in his Tennessee factory.

Apparently Harman, who has been appointed undersecretary of commerce, thinks just as highly of Maccoby's abilities. Last month, interviewing for the job of assistant secretary for congressional liaison, he assembled the six candidates in a room with a tape recorder running on the table. Only after a while did one of the aspirants recognize supershrink Maccoby sitting in the corner. Now, Maccoby regularly records the sessions, evaluates the candidates' personalities and advises on the final choice.

In this case, winning or losing will all depend on how you play the game.

Mum's the word

Some things never seem to change with administrations. News reports of CIA payoffs to foreign leaders have sparked official anger toward the press and raised the specter of renewed attempts to control the flow of sensitive information. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance reportedly believes that the *Washington Post* picked the morning of his arrival in Jordan to headline King Hussein's involvement because the timing would get the maximum attention. American officials privately attack the *Post* for jeopardizing

UPI

Vance and Hussein: Ya pays your money and ya takes your chances

Vance's Mideast peace effort, although Hussein himself never mentioned the matter during the talks. As a result of the disclosures, not only will the administration attempt to restrict the number of congressional committees with access to intelligence information, but the White House may revive proposals of the Ford and Nixon Administrations to apply criminal sanctions against leaks of government secrets.

Out of the desert

At the highest level, administration officials are reviewing a range of pressures to make Israel more amenable to a Mideast settlement. They will try the carrot first—increased foreign aid. If that fails, the stick of aid cutbacks may be applied. The recent cancellation of Ford's promise of concussion bombs was made not only on merits, but served as a warning. Carter, it is said, is convinced that Mideast peace is urgently necessary and, to achieve it, Israel will have to withdraw virtually all the way back to the pre-1967 borders.

Seventies

Killing the committee

When the House of Representatives voted on February 2 to give two more months of life to its beleaguered select committee investigating the assassinations of

President Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr., many felt that the House was merely searching for an easy way to ease the committee out of existence. House Speaker Tip O'Neill went so far as to tell a Washington television audience on February 25 that, unless the committee produced proof of conspiracy by March 31, "the committee isn't going to be continued." Under the circumstances, this pronouncement by O'Neill was tantamount to a death sentence.

What began with the unilateral firing of chief counsel Richard A. Sprague by chairman Henry B. Gonzalez (a move blocked by the other 11 committee members) has grown into a running feud between the chairman and his committee, in which the Sprague matter has almost become a side issue. The eccentric Gonzalez, in defiance of the rest of the committee, has crippled the investigative capability of the staff, shutting off their access to FBI, CIA and Secret Service files and to long-distance telephone lines. At the last committee meeting, Gonzalez publicly accused committee member Richardson Preyer (Dem.—N.C.), one of the most respected members of the House, of conspiring to take over the chairmanship. The committee adjourned over Gonzalez' objection and filed out of the chamber, leaving Gonzalez to rail against Sprague and the committee to an astonished press corps.

Finally, on March 2, Gonzalez offered his resignation as chairman, but O'Neill for the time being declined to submit the resignation to the House for approval.

Congress is acutely aware that it will be accused of covering up if the current probe is shut down. And it most certainly will inspire a backlash on the part of the Black Caucus, which was promised a reopening of the King case by the House leadership.

One conceivable face-saving scenario on the Kennedy case might be for the House to turn the entire matter over to the Senate Intelligence Committee which, *New Times* has confirmed, has quietly resurrected its investigation of the Kennedy assassination under the direction of Senator Gary Hart (Dem.—Colo.).

Such a move would hardly warm the hearts of critics, since the limited investigation conducted by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence under Hart and Senator Richard Schweiker (Rep.—Penn.) last year failed to review the key finding of the Warren Commission: that Lee Harvey Oswald had indeed killed the president. No physical evidence was examined.

The Schweiker-Hart report was extremely critical of the FBI's investigation of the assassination and found that relevant evidence dealing with CIA plots against Castro never found its way to the Warren Commission. But the Senate report leaned heavily toward an alleged Castro connection to Oswald while ignoring or glossing over evidence of Oswald links to American intelligence agencies. Evidence pointing toward involvement in the assassination by Cuban exiles, organized crime or other domestic groups was similarly given short shrift.

Critics also pointed out that to speculate about the possible forces behind the assassination without attempting to resolve the question of Oswald's guilt represented a clear case of putting the carriage before the horse.

The fact that Hart is directing the new Senate probe does not instill confidence that the new investigation will be any more thorough than the last. Despite the fact that the Senate committee's findings obviously spread a dark shadow over the entire Warren Commission investigation, Hart was widely quoted as being satisfied that Oswald had acted alone. He contended that the question still to be resolved was not whether he did it but rather why he did it.

With one congressional committee seemingly dead, barring a miracle, and with another of dubious intent gearing up, it seems more and more likely that the answers in the King and Kennedy cases will be a long time coming.

—Jerry Policoff

Fly me to the moon

Neil Armstrong's trip to the moon was as much a fantasy as Jules Verne's. So says Bill Kaysing, formerly a technical writer for the Apollo project and author of an 87-page booklet that debunks the Giant Step for Mankind as myth: our astronauts, Kaysing claims, never did walk on the moon, they simply bounced around on a bit of sand in a nuclear testing site, an hour's drive from Las Vegas. And those incredible lunar panoramas were nothing more than Stanley Kubrick backdrops; the spine-tingling module splashdown, airdrops from a large plane.

THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

Lunar sting: Grounded moonwalks

According to Kaysing, who first started on the project as a spoof and then decided he wasn't finding anything to laugh at, moon-crazed NASA officials found themselves, in the early sixties, $30 billion out of pocket and light years behind the Soviets in the race to the moon: "When it became evident that they couldn't make it, they decided to fake it."

Kaysing, himself, is winging it—his theory is, he admits, pure speculation. But this doesn't seem to prevent others from taking off on his ideas. According to the California writer, radio listener surveys have shown that about 30 percent of the American public doubts that anyone has ever been to the moon. Anyone for green cheese?

Roots of all evil

The wave of Black Togetherness inspired by Alex Haley's *Roots* took a turn for the worse in Cincinnati on February 13 when Jesse L. Coulter held eight terrified captives for 15 hours with a shotgun in the Catherine Booth Home for unwed mothers. Coulter said he wanted information on the son he and his former wife gave up for adoption at the home 20 years ago.

After surrendering, Coulter told the *Cincinnati Post* he'd watched the TV movie *Roots* and was deeply moved by black author Haley's tracing his ancestry back to a Mandinka warrior in Gambia. "I'm a warrior, too," said Coulter. "It was like a spiritual awakening when I saw this picture *Roots*."

A small step for Bigfoot?

The recent TV show might have renewed interest in Bigfoot but the Oregon legislature isn't happy, and is now considering a resolution that would protect the Sasquatch from inconsiderate curiosity seekers.

State Representative Ted Kulongoski (Rep.—Junction City) said his kids talked him into introducing the resolution. It would prohibit "harassing, annoying or intimidating" the giant, manlike creature.

The children "were concerned that, with all these people out hunting for Sasquatch, it would spoil the environment and someone might actually catch him and put him in a zoo," Kulongoski said.

The resolution, which provides for a maximum penalty of "two days labor picking up garbage along Oregon highways," notes that the notoriously shy Bigfoot "has never so much as stolen a picnic basket."

Mind & Body

Zapping zits

Clearasil, move over—medical science may have at last found a cure for pimples which is neither a skin-tone cream nor a kill-joy diet, but a thoroughly modern pill.

Swedish dermatologist Gerd Michaelsson reports that when he had his pimply patients take three effervescent zinc sulfate tablets every day for 12 weeks, anywhere from 15 to 100 percent of their acne disappeared. The average patient experienced a clear-up of 85 percent.

What makes the findings even more impressive is that all of the 64 patients, aged 13 to 25, had protracted cases of acne that had resisted conventional remedies; more than half had had the scourge for at least two years and several had been afflicted for five years.

Why does zinc work where so many other elements fail? Michaelsson, who teaches at Uppsala University, says he has no idea.

Sane asylums

"What this country needs is a good five-cent asylum." This is no Republican scheme for a more balanced budget, but psychiatrist Darold Treffert's scheme for a more balanced populace. Treffert, director of the Winnebago Mental Health Institute in Winnebago, Wis., proposes a nationwide system of Sane Asylums where, as he says, the "worried well" can escape for a while before they become "worried sick."

"Though we've had getaway places in the past, such spas were pretty much just for the rich," says

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Treffert. "Other retreats of the past had some kind of party line or admission ticket. What I propose are places where persons and their families could easily check in and out unashamedly, legitimately, noneuphemistically, without having to apologize, make excuses, borrow money, mortgage their home, take an oath, be baptized, or answer to peer review."

Sane Asylums, as Treffert describes them, will be a bargain by today's standards: they'll cost $25 or less a day, surroundings will be informal, and basic therapy will be offered to those who want it. There is, says Treffert, a "very human need, every now and then, to step back, reflect, retreat. If there were places people did not need a travel agent to get to, and did not need to have an illness to qualify for, there are many, many people who could avoid being hospitalized, could be kept from dropping out, or could be kept from killing themselves by work, stress, or by their own hand."

Tellurian Community, Inc., a nonprofit corporation, is negotiating to buy the site of the first Sane Asylum, a 1000-acre estate on Green Lake in Wisconsin. The first project, according to Treffert, will be open to anyone interested. "But I don't think of this project as a sort of Kentucky Fried Sane Asylum franchise operation at all; rather it's a pilot showing that this is a respectable and necessary thing to do, so that other communities will tailor their own from it."

"Treffert has put his finger on a problem," says Dr. Don Hammersley, deputy medical director of the American Psychiatric Association. "Mental hospitals these days are more sharply defining what their use is. They treat sick people, primarily, and so, as a matter of public policy, most chronic illness has been moved back to the communities." The project, he feels, has merit, but "would be a very tough thing to have much hope of success for as a new federally funded social program. The regulation centers would rush in, accountability experts would rush in, and it would take out a lot of the informality Treffert is pleading for."

On the whole, criticism has been minimal, says Treffert. "Some people accuse it of being a Communist plot. It is an insidious way, they say, of allowing us all to sit on our behinds and contemplate our navels instead of doing useful work. Antithetical to the American way." And some professionals feel that Sane Asylums could wind up with groups of people having incompatible needs. "It's not focused enough, they tell me," says Treffert. "You know, what's the party line?" Some people just never seem to catch on.

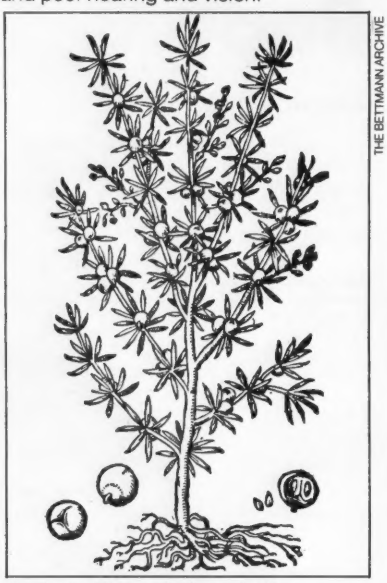
—Bob Miner

Junking health food

Health food merchants, those purveyors of pure and natural goods, may be the nation's biggest drug pushers. At least that's the way the National Council on Drug Abuse makes it sound. The Chicago-based group claims that dozens of exotic herbs, teas, spices and tobaccos sold by the stores are actually psychoactive intoxicants (which might account for their popularity), and it warns that overusing any of them can be dangerous.

The council especially urges moderation with the following:

• Yohimbe bark, California poppy, Kavakava, Mormon tea, periwinkle, mandrake and nutmeg. These are mildly hallucinogenic; in excess, the council warns, Kavakave tea causes skin rashes, incoordination and poor hearing and vision.



THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

Juniper: High art of gardening

• Juniper and thorn apple are both strongly hallucinogenic.

• Scotch broom is a strong sedative-hypnotic.

• Wild lettuce, wormwood and prickly poppy all are cited as narcotic painkillers.

•Hydrangeia, kola nut, mate, lobelia, Mormon tea and passion flower are mild stimulants.

• Mint Bidis (imported from India) and thorn apple are also strong sedatives.

• Hare Rama Bidis, sold as a tobacco, contains six to nine times the amount of nicotine as American cigarettes.

• Jimson weed, a hallucinogenic, in excessive doses, produces flushed skin, rapid pulse, incoherent speech and dizziness.

Even sassafras tea, the council states, when used in extraordinary amounts, has proven to be carcinogenic and will block or interfere with the action of prescribed drugs.

—Larry Frederick

Taking Care of Business

Alperovitzian economics

Old Andrew Carnegie and J.D. Rockefeller must be rolling in their graves. About a year ago, the *Harvard Business Review* asked its corporate readership which of two ideologies will prevail in the U.S. by 1985: the first was a basic description of today's business world, in which the most fit survive, property rights are sacred, as is open-market competition, and the less government the better. The second described a structure in which property rights are less important than citizens rights to income, health and education. Personal fulfillment would be tied up with one's place in an organic social process. Surprisingly, 73 percent of the business community responding believed that the capitalist system would be largely replaced by the communal one.

Their premonition came a step closer to reality in December, when some of the Senate's leading liberal Democrats—Kennedy, Humphrey, Cranston and Proxmire—joined 47 other congresspeople, the heads of two of the nation's largest unions and dozens of public interest groups in supporting a relatively unknown economist named Gar Alperovitz for one of the three positions on the all-important Council of Economic Advisors to the President. Normally such an impressive array of liberal luminaries backing a particular candidate for this position would attract a great deal of attention. The Alperovitz endorsement, however, only generated two newspaper stories. Why?

Alperovitz' prestigious backers preferred it that way: the campaign was purposely low-keyed and reserved. Alperovitz is among a new breed of economists emerging on the national scene who are proposing a range of bold institutional alternatives to the present corporate-dominated economic system, solutions that they feel will begin to eliminate the chronic disorders that have plagued our economy for nearly 20 years.

Alperovitz himself is a brilliant economist with impeccable

establishment credentials, including a doctorate from Cambridge's King's College and years of service inside both the government and the academic community. For the last four years, he has served as director of a project on economic alternatives—an ambitious research effort launched by 25 of the nation's leading foundations, such as the Stern Fund and the John Hay Whitney Foundation.

Alperovitz is not, however, another liberal theoritician in the Keynesian New Deal mode. Nor can he be categorized as an old-line traditional socialist. He is a problem solver who combines a sense of democratic ideals with a pragmatic eye toward finding workable solutions to our economic ills. Alperovitz believes that "the final quarter of the twentieth century will be radically different from anything we have ever experienced economically." For this reason, he advocates a wholly new economic approach, including more direct citizen participation in economic planning, community- and worker-run firms, and a mix of publicly owned banks and industries.

In signing a letter of endorsement for Alperovitz, Kennedy, Humphrey, Proxmire and the others made it clear that while they were not supporting a laundry list of specific economic remedies, they did back Alperovitz because of a belief that " the Council should also be directed to seek out new . . . options for future policy consideration."

Alperovitz did not get the appointment to the CEA. The decision to reject his appointment was said to have been made by Charles Schultze, council chairman. Said one Washington public interest advocate, "Schultze wanted to run a tight ship made up of traditional Ivy League economic thinkers. There was simply no room for anyone advocating new directions."

Nonetheless, the significance of someone like Alperovitz being endorsed for such an influential position by Kennedy, Humphrey, et al. cannot be underestimated. It amounts to an admission by the liberal leadership that the time has come to begin the process of fundamentally redesigning the American economic system, and it represents the formation of an economic ideology that is likely to jell into a major political force by the early 1980s.

There are many other indications of this new movement: over the past two years, hundreds of public officials have been meeting regularly at a series of economic-alternative conferences. On the labor front, new rank-and-file union leaders, like Ed Sadlowski of the United Steel Workers, are also looking at some wide-ranging economic alternatives. And it seems there is considerable public support for economic alternatives to the present system. One survey showed that a plurality of Americans favor major changes in the economy including public ownership of natural resources and some worker and consumer control over economic enterprises.

Although it is still too early to assess the scope of this emerging economic ideology, if the economy takes another serious dive in the next few years the demands for less traditional economic approaches would surely increase—demands that could well force the administration to begin listening to people like Gar Alperovitz.

—Jeremy Rifkin and Ted Howard

Post Scripts

Returning a no-return

Four days after *New Times* reported the fact that acrylonitrile bottles used by Coca-Cola might be causing cancer, the Food and Drug Administration announced that it was considering withdrawing its approval of the plastic bottle. Studies were cited showing that the acrylonitrile might cause lesions or other growths in test animals: "Because these are method development tests, we cannot say that there definitely is migration of acrylonitrile. Right now, all we can say is that there appears to be migration," a spokesman later said. Officials of Monsanto, producer of the acrylonitrile bottle, continue to maintain that repeated tests have shown no detectable migration of the plastic into the bottles' contents and say they feel future testing will support their findings. Nevertheless, they have shut down three plants that manufacture the plastic bottle until "we get clarification from the FDA."

That might be coming very soon: The FDA expects to have made its decision officially known in the Federal Register by the time this issue is on the newsstands. And the feeling around the FDA is that the marketing of acrylonitrile bottles won't be allowed until more tests have been completed some time in early 1978. According to Coca-Cola, some bottlers who've been contacted by confused customers aren't waiting to hear the news and have already contacted glass manufacturers. But this won't end up being any back-door victory for environmentalists: all the glass bottles will be nonreturnable. "It's the customer's decision," explains a Coke spokesman.

"I have clinched and closed with the naked North, I have learned to defy and defend; Shoulder to shoulder we have fought it out—yet the wild must win in the end." Robert Service
Soft-spoken and smooth, its hundred-proof potency simmers just below the surface. Straight, on the rocks, or mixed, YUKON JACK is a breed apart; unlike any Canadian liquor you've ever tasted.
The Black Sheep of Canadian Liquors.
Yukon Jack®
100 Proof Imported Liqueur
made with Blended Canadian Whisky.
Yukon Jack 80 and 100 Proof. Imported and Bottled by Heublein, Inc. Hartford, Conn. Sole Agents U.S.A. *©1907 Dodd, Mead & Co., Inc.

Get this, Peoria. Your U.S. representative costs $1.5 million per year—largely in free combs, cheap cigarettes and laminated, wallet-sized copies of electrocardiograms

By Robert Shrum

THE IMPERIAL CONGRESS

You lose touch with what it's like out there. You come to believe that you really are *better than the people who sent you here.* —Senator James Abourezk

From spacious offices and gilded hearing rooms they come, carried as if on a breeze—a swift, one-tenth-mile ride by private subway that Parisians would envy—to the great alabaster Capitol itself.

One flight up by private elevator, their paths are cleared of the noisy, Instamatic-brandishing citizenry by their own private police force; they are heading for their own private dining room . . .

"Hi, Carl . . . Well, *hello* Senator . . . Right this way, Senator . . . Say hello to Hubert Humphrey . . . Senator . . . Senator . . . Senator."

The United States Senate dines in a room fit for the gods, were the gods partial to obsequious service, oversized chandeliers and authentic stained-glass imitation windows that camouflage the walls. The air is of rarefied self-importance; better still, the price is right.

A filet of sole stuffed with crabmeat and shrimp goes for $10.95 in New York or San Francisco. In the Senators' dining room, it costs $2.75. The last time most other restaurants served 12-ounce sirloin steaks for $6.75 was circa 1965. In the Senators' dining room, time has stood still. Living in the past is the best revenge.

All of this is subsidized, of course. By you. In 1975, the Senate restaurants reported a loss of $240,000. One afternoon that October, after a hearty lunch in the dining room, several senators took the elevator upstairs to their Chamber and voted against the School Lunch Act. The country, they insisted, just couldn't afford it.

Across the hill, the House of Representatives, as befits its more plebeian dynamic, operates its food service in the black. Still, a member can order a roast leg of lamb for $3.35. How is it possible? Well, for one thing, the wines served in the House dining rooms come cheap, very cheap—wholesale from Inglenook, a California vintner with a considerable stake in congressionally set duties on foreign wines.

And neither the House nor the

PHOTOGRAPH BY RON DE MILT

200-SX

Suddenly from Datsun: A sporty car with everything but a sports car price.

Exit dull, sluggish economy cars.

Enter Datsun's spicy 200-SX, Sweet-handling. Tasty appointments. And no bitter price to swallow. Enjoy.

Fun and frugal 5-speed.

Sporty 5-speed transmission works like overdrive. Thus, saving gas.

According to EPA estimates, 200-SX squeezes 34 MPG on the Highway, 23 City. Naturally, your actual mileage depends on driving habits, optional equipment and condition of car. California mileage lower.

Extras, yes. Extra cost, no.

- AM/FM multiplex stereo radio
- Steel belted radial tires
- Tachometer
- Fully reclining bucket seats
- Cut-pile carpeting
- Electric rear window defogger
- Tinted glass
- Electric clock
- Sporty 5-speed gearbox
- Power-assist front disc brakes

All for $4399! (Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price not including destination charges, taxes, license or title fees and optional tape stripe and mag type wheel cover package.)

Tough sport.

Solid, all-steel unibody is but one example of how the Datsun 200-SX is put together to stay together. Fact is, when we made this fun little car, we made sure of one thing.

The fun would last.

Suddenly it's going to dawn on you.

DATSUN SAVES

Senate figure into their balance sheets the salaries of restaurant workers, the cost of linen and plates, the price of dishwashers and other major equipment; such incidentals are buried, for instance, in the budget of the Capitol Architect. With all the standard expenses added in, the House restaurants are losing thousands of dollars a year, and the Senate $800,000, which works out to a culinary subsidy of $8,000 per senator per year.

And that is only the tip of the iceberg lettuce. The good life on Capitol Hill will never be heralded in a campaign brochure, but it is one of Congress' most conspicuous achievements. Comfortable, affordable, gracious, spacious—Congress has created a great society all its own.

No detail is too small to embellish the lifestyle to which congresspersons have become accustomed. Free combs and brushes are regularly delivered to members' offices. In their private barbershop, senators pay three dollars for a razor cut, style and shampoo—a quarter of the going rate in Georgetown. The barbershop also preserves the relic of another age, a 25-cent shoeshine. In both Senate and House, congressional shoes can be repaired, redyed and resoled at cut rate.

In the underground garage of the Rayburn Office Building, five full-time laborers wash and polish House members' cars. And once on the streets of Washington, those shiny cars need never suffer the indignity of a parking ticket: in the United States Code, along with the other great laws of the land, Congress has voted itself special license plates, making it legal for members to park illegally.

Across the street from the Rayburn Building, the 57 employees of the Botanic Garden nurture and then deliver two plants every other month to the 535 congressional offices. ("Cut flowers are available in the spring," says one gardener.) These botanic niceties, from a greenhouse costing taxpayers $1.2 million a year, are among the less expensive touches of congressional office decor. In 1977, the House will spend $4,000 a member for furniture and furnishings, much of it custom-made. In addition, every congressman is allotted $27,000 to furnish and equip a District office; for carpets and curtains in their home-state offices, senators can spend $4,500.

All members of Congress are entitled to 50 free picture framings a year, as well as free prints from the National Gallery of Art, just in case they run short of things to frame. Last January, two Senate nailmen spent three full days covering the walls of Strom Thurmond's new office with hundreds of portraits, illustrations and testimonials.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BETSY K. FRAMPTON

The Imperial PX: Congressional cigarettes are 42 cents a pack, tax free

Free massages help to improve the ambience in the Senate gym, but in fact it cannot compare with the splendor of the newer House gym, which features paddle ball courts, a sauna room, a basketball court, a weight room, a carpeted locker room and an Olympic size swimming pool. Previously, congresswomen could not swim in the House pool except during special hours because congressmen insisted on swimming in the nude. The pool is now de-chauvinized, the men having reluctantly consented to wear trunks, but most of the gym remains an all-male preserve.

And then there are the steamer trunks, old-fashioned, brass-hinged jobs. Every member of the House can claim a trunk a year. California Representative George Miller explains: "Some people take the trunks for their kids who are going away to college. Others use them for coffee tables. I have one. They're a leftover from the days when congressional sessions lasted only a few months and congressmen spent most of their time back home. They needed their files so they got trunks to carry them on the train. But this isn't 1860. We're here year round. Maybe anybody who takes the trunks ought to be forced to ride Amtrak."

From steamer trunks to saunas, from pictures to philodendrons, the congressional demand for personal goods and services has generated an ever-growing support industry which today includes 19,000 employees on Capitol Hill. Congress has become literally "a city on a hill," which was not quite what JFK had in mind when he used that phrase as a metaphor for high legislative standards.

The Edifice Complex

Like any hustling city, Congress' domain is ever-expanding—$130 million worth of new construction in the last five years. As swiftly as space is added, it is filled with new employees, recrowded to the same density as before, and the cycle goes on. The number of Senate staff members has more than doubled to 6,500 since 1960; and in the House, the number has tripled to 10,000 in the last two decades.

The Rayburn House Office Building, the most expensive structure in human history at the time of its construction ($125 million), features balustrades of custom-quarried natural stone, burnished marble gargoyles, and kitch-

An American Pyramid: The Sam Rayburn building cost $125 million, exhausted a whole marble quarry; the Senate Recording Studio, bottom, provides professional makeup, backdrops and free videotape messages

enettes upon request. It took two quarries in Vermont and Georgia to hew out the pink marble trim. Somehow, hallway entrances to the members' private offices were forgotten and afterward had to be knocked out of the cement and plaster walls.

Not to be outdone, the Senate is now constructing a new (third) office building, which will double its office space to 2 million square feet. Estimated cost: $85 million.

The staff needs the room, but the senators will get it. The space is to be distributed imperially: 18-foot-high offices with cathedral ceilings for senators, two nine-foot tiers of windowless offices behind them for secretaries and assistants. The Senate has also authorized $50,000 for a design study of a proposed third underground garage. If built, each parking space in the new garage will cost some $22,000, or about half the price of the average American home.

Senator John Culver, the Iowa Democrat responsible for the commission now studying Senate operations, complains that the Capitol Architect's office encourages the congressional edifice complex. "They are planning more buildings on the assumption of a linear extrapolation of the staff explosion of recent years," he says. "Surely we should be able to hold the line on that somewhere." There has never been a space utilization study of Capitol Hill. Culver argues, "There are activities in the Capitol building that could be done in Baltimore—or Alaska."

Leading imperialists in the Capitol include the Senate Sergeant-at-Arms, whose 1,200 employees represent a 600 percent increase in the last 50 years, and the Capitol Architect, whose office personnel has swelled by 2300 percent in the same period. Each of these permanent floating bureaucracies is in turn divided into sub-bureaucracies, each jealously guarding its own prerogatives. The system is Kafkaesque. Walls, ceilings and floors are under separate jurisdictions. One Senate aide describes the travail of changing offices: "Movers move desks, but not typewriters. The service department does that. Carpenters hang maps, but not pictures." Changing a manual worker's job title can require a full-fledged act of Congress. Senate offices exhausting their allotment of mimeograph paper can obtain more only by ordering new mimeograph machines. In the House, the clerk can accept only 25 cosponsors on a bill; if additional members wish to be associated with a piece of legislation, identical bills must be reintroduced and reprinted, with new identi-

fying numbers to accommodate them. This technicality costs a million a year.

All the Kings' Men

Many of Congress' employees expend their energies easing the legislative and intellectual burdens of the imperium. There is, for example, the Congressional Reference Service of the Library of Congress. In theory, the service prepares studies of legislation and analyses of current issues. In fact, CRS employees also ghostwrite articles, partisan speeches, entire books and, frequently, term papers for congressional children. (The daughter of one congressman admits that she made it through college on 15 papers from CRS.) "Usually the papers are requested as legislative studies," explains one researcher, "though sometimes they come right out and say, 'This is for the congressman's kid.' "

At congressional behest, CRS also fulfills constituent requests for information; last year, there were 64,000 such requests. One representative dumped 400 requests on the service in one day. Another insisted that a researcher postpone an important economic study to find out whether the camels along the Suez Canal have one hump or two. A House member recently asked, "How many miles of bicycle paths were built in 1974?"

The researchers have their own private list of the dumbest senators and representatives. "There is," says one, "a consensus that the biggest idiot of all is [Virginia Senator] Bill Scott. Once we had to prepare material for him to oppose a conservation bill. He dictated what he wanted us to prove. He was wrong, but we worked on it anyway—and then he forgot to show up for the hearing."

Other senatorial helpers include a corps of "gallery rats," as they call themselves, who sit all day in the Senate gallery monitoring the proceedings on the floor below. At the ringing of the bell for a vote, they rise in a Pavlovian rush to the elevators to tell their employers, who have been off the floor, which way to vote. One gallery rat never even has to stir from his seat: his boss hurries into the chamber, glances up, and the aide flashes a thumbs up or down.

Otherwise, the Senate chamber often is nearly deserted, with a lone senator orating to the empty seats of absent colleagues. Occasionally, President Pro Tempore James Eastland, the most senior senator, may wander onto the floor puffing a cigar. The cigar is a violation of Senate rules, but no one dares rebuke the Mississippi grandee. In any case, it is likely to be a Cuban cigar (in violation of the embargo law), and many senators engage in a lively trade in that particular contraband, bringing the cigars back from foreign trips to pass among their peers; Vice President Mondale is a frequent and grateful recipient.

The standard defense for the empty chamber, as for the gallery rats, is that the legislators are busy elsewhere, usually in committee meetings and hearings. But last year, an Appropriations Committee assistant named Harley Dirks had such trouble rounding up senators to actually hold a hearing that he gave up and fabricated his own; he used the names of real senators and witnesses, asking and answering fictional questions, and then had a transcript printed, complete with place, date and hour. This was too much, even for the imperial Congress, and Dirks was fired when his creative writing was revealed.

All in the Family

The fringe benefits are not the heart of the matter; the basic trouble is attitude. Consider congressional wages:

Last month, a 30 percent raise boosted the senators' and representatives' pay from $44,000 to $57,000. Congressmen were grumbling mightily among themselves that the cost of living

Attend Valerie Carter's debut.

It seemed like everybody who was anybody in L.A. turned out for the sessions that led to this, Valerie Carter's debut album. Valerie has friends in the business, and no wonder. She's sung backup for Jackson Browne, James Taylor and Little Feat... written tunes like "Cook With Honey" for Judy Collins. Her music is fresh, but she's no newcomer.
Now Valerie is about to make as many friends outside the music business as she's made inside.
And no wonder.

Valerie Carter
Just A Stone's Throw Away
including:
Ooh Child/City Lights/Cowboy Angel
Heartache/Back To Blue Some More

"Just a Stone's Throw Away."
The voice and songs of Valerie Carter, on Columbia Records and Tapes.

"COLUMBIA," MARCAS REG. © 1977 CBS INC.

The Big Frame: It took two workmen three days to hang all of Strom Thurmond's wall plaques (top). The carpentry shop (center) will frame *anything* free, even cheesecake. Mo Udall often gets coiffed in the Senate beauty shop

had soared 60 percent since 1970. Maybe it *was* hard to make ends meet. Yet, because of their imperial style of doing things, most congressmen were loath to argue their case publicly. "How do you tell a guy back home earning $10,000 that $44,000 isn't enough?" asked one Senate Democrat. Minority leader Howard Baker told dinner companions last fall that senators were underpaid, and that this heightened the temptation to stretch fringe benefits, open law firms and collect fat lecture fees from special interests. Yet, Baker declared, he would have to lead the fight against the raise if it reached the Senate floor. Politically, it was the only smart thing to do.

In the end, Congress evaded an actual vote on the raise, which took effect automatically thanks to a technicality in the federal pay rules—a bit of congressionally ordained sleight of hand, which allows such salaries to increase *without* a vote. Silence in this case was, literally, golden. (If, at 57 thou, things are still tight, the members don't need a friend at Chase Manhattan. The House Bank will negotiate loans for them on generous terms from Washington's private banks.)

One necessity they never have to borrow for is medical care. The government may lack the resources for national health insurance, but not for what amounts to socialized medicine for Congress. This includes free annual physicals, inoculations, physiotherapy, lab services and laminated, wallet-size copies of electrocardiograms. Medicare patients have to pay for their prescriptions out of Social Security; senators get free drugs, vitamins and allergy shots from the 10 offices and first-aid stations of the Attending Physician. A sick legislator can check into Walter Reed or Bethesda Naval Hospital for the subsidized rate of $168 a day; it covers everything from a private room to 24-hour nursing care to open-heart surgery. And if the surgery fails, there is always the congressional life insurance of $47,000 for an annual premium of $432—and an extra $55,000 for no premium at all. (And when members leave Capitol Hill on that last journey home, the Sergeant-at-Arms functions as an undertaker, arranging and paying for their funerals.)

One colleague recalls riding with Utah's Wallace Bennett on the Senate subway shortly before Bennett was to retire. A senior citizens' delegation had just been to see Bennett, and the senator was riled. "These people," he grumbled, "keep asking for more and more Social Security. They've got to stop." But Bennett, already a millionaire after an earlier

career in private business, did not wince at the idea of accepting his forthcoming senatorial pension of nearly $18,000 a year, a sum seven times the average Social Security benefit. Typical congressional pensions can reach $11,000 annually after six years of service, $20,000 after 15 years, and can soar as high as $38,000.

Even the most conservative members of Congress wage no crusades against this election-to-grave welfare state for themselves. "It's an incredible hypocrisy," says one liberal senator who is troubled by it—though not so troubled that he chooses to go public on the subject. "It's socialism for us and fiscal restraint for the rest of the country."

Not that Congress is totally unwilling to share the good life on Capitol Hill. Many members—good family men—share it with kin. Ten years ago, Congress passed an antinepotism statute forbidding members to hire their own relatives. The law, however, has proved easy to circumvent through the good offices of obliging colleagues. A daughter of Representative John Dent of Pennsylvania went to work in the office of Representative Richard Ichord of Missouri. Another Dent daughter was hired by Connecticut Congressman Robert Giaimo, whose own daughter, in turn, was given a staff position on Dent's House Elections Subcommittee. Former House Ethics Committee Chairman Melvyn Price managed to place his brother in a $17,000 job in another House office. Newly elected House Majority Leader James Wright has had his clan all over Capitol Hill: wife, daughter and his son-in-law's brother, who works in Wright's own office. . . . All in the family.

Congress has put most clerical and craft jobs in the executive branch under civil service. But on Capitol Hill there are few written job descriptions, and many posts are explicit patronage, including all 43 Senate elevator operators and 67 Senate Post Office workers, who are paid $11,000 a year for a 28-hour work week.

Perhaps the oddest source of congressional patronage is the United States Capitol Police. One hundred and twenty of the pistol-packing officers on the House side are patronage employees. With a budget of $17 million a year, the force is larger than the police departments of Oakland or Nashville. Congress has one cop for every twenty of Capitol Hill's daytime inhabitants; to achieve the same ratio, New York City would have to recruit 280,000 additional police officers.

House Administration Chairman Frank Thompson says the number of Hill police "actually might be too small," but a confidential report of consultants from the International Association of Police Chiefs recently reported that at the "decrepit and filthy" headquarters of the Capitol Police "officers were sitting around reading newspapers or engaged in bull sessions." The consultants also discovered that the Capitol cops "perform nonpolice functions" as escorts, chauffeurs and doormen.

Join the Congress and See the World

Patronage is a welcome and often valuable fringe benefit of congressional service—who knows when the son of a major contributor might need a summer job?—but it hardly compares with the gratifying opportunities for travel abroad that come with a seat in the House or Senate.

The full extent of congressional travel is well concealed, but the independent *Congressional Quarterly* estimates that, in 1975, at least 308 senators and representatives journeyed to foreign lands on "official missions" at least 544 times. Half of the trips were to Europe, one-fiftieth to the Indian subcontinent.

"Congressional travel is important," says Common Cause vice-president Fred Wertheimer, "sometimes for a very specific purpose, and because it's useful for parochial members to see the world beyond Capitol Hill and their districts. The problem, as usual, is that there are no guidelines, no standards of right and wrong."

Even legitimate trips can provide free vacations for a legislator's spouse and family, courtesy of the taxpayers. Nine members of a congressional tour of Africa last November took relatives along. The respected leader of moderate Republicans in the House, Illinois' John Anderson, took his wife; Yvonne Burke of California took her husband; D.C. Delegate Walter Fauntroy took his father; Charles Diggs of Detroit, who in his years in Congress has circumnavigated the globe repeatedly at public expense, brought his daughter.

(For Diggs, the African trip also had an unexpected fact-finding bonus. In a cable to the State Department, he requested that department personnel in Rhodesia be assigned to provide security for him during a one-man stopover in Salisbury. The department cabled back to Diggs, who is chairman of the House Subcommittee on Africa, that the U.S. has no diplomatic relations with Rhodesia and therefore no one to look after visiting congressmen there.)

Members' relatives can travel

After dinner magic. Sambuca Romana, the spectacular liqueur, imported from Italy and the favorite Sambuca in the entire New World. Serve it with coffee beans Con Mosca, as a cordial, in espresso or American coffee. 84 pf. For 68 other ideas, get our new recipe booklet. Write Palmer & Lord, Ltd., Dept.N1, Syosset, N.Y. 11791.

free, due to the happy coincidence of "space available," as it is officially termed, on the air force planes frequently assigned to congressional delegations. That is the justification Burke invokes for the extra riders on the African trip. "Anyway," she complains, "the plane had only one window and the chairman kept it. We were cooped up in there for days."

Senators and representatives abroad collect an allowance of $75 a day in local currency. The money, which is handed to them in small brown envelopes by U.S. embassy officials meeting their planes, is supposed to be spent for actual living expenses, but congressional travelers are not required to keep records, and few do. The congressional definition of "living expenses" is elastic, and often it embraces such items as artwork, rugs, Liberty ties from London and handmade silk screens from Japan. Indiana's recently—and involuntarily—retired senator, Vance Hartke, used to pass his packets of local currency to his wife at the airport and send her off shopping.

In 1975, House Speaker Tip O'Neill's delegation to the Middle East returned to Andrews Air Force Base with a mini-mountain of packages, boxes and crates, but no one bothered to file a customs declaration for imports above the legal duty-free allowance of $100.

(The O'Neill delegation was more fortunate than the army general who consigned a Rolls Royce home in a military transport, listing it as K-rations to avoid the tariff. He met the plane, only to find it empty. "What happened?" he demanded. Engine trouble over the Atlantic; the cargo had to be ditched. "Jesus," said the general, "how can I put in an insurance claim for $25,000 worth of K-rations?")

Members of Congress so indulge themselves in foreign travel that the Senate has a rule limiting the number of members flying in a single plane to an even dozen. One advantage of the rule is that it assures a plentiful supply of that "space available" for relatives, since the air force transports always have more than 12 seats. Last year, the military alone spent $2.3 million for congressional journeys—$4,300 per member. And this sum does not include the many congressmen who traveled commercially at public expense rather than on air force planes.

Nor does it include the costs in public policy of gift trips from foreign governments—a common method of rewarding their congressional friends and making an investment in their views and votes. The Korean junkets are the most

Full equality for the following people . . .

It was a Saturday morning, and the senior senator from Texas was stopping by the Hill to pick up some papers from his office. "Good morning, Senator," said the Capitol cop at the entrance to the Russell Building, as John Tower passed by in a ten-gallon hat and high-heeled boots; at 5 feet, 6 inches, Tower is the shortest man in the Senate; the outfit gave him a lift.

He clomped down the quiet corridor and into a nearby elevator, where he monosyllabically mumbled a floor number to the young operator. As the car approached the Texan's floor, two staccato buzzes sounded on the operator's console; as instructed his first day on the job, the operator responded instantly to that senatorial signal, bypassing Tower's stop.

"What the hell are you doing?" snapped Tower.

"Hold on, cowboy," replied the operator, who had not recognized him. "We got a U.S. senator coming aboard." And the Sergeant-at-Arms had an opening for an elevator operator.

For most employers in America, Congress has mandated a strict set of fair-employment laws, which forbid arbitrary dismissals. For itself, however, Congress has maintained "almost completely unfettered control over the employment relationship," as a Culver Commission report put it. In its manner of hiring and firing, Congress flouts both its own legislation and basic fairness. Termination notices for restaurant employees, notes the Culver Commission, "usually do not state the reason . . . . This practice stems from the belief that termination for 'no cause stated' is less susceptible to a legal challenge than termination for 'cause.'"

Professional office staffs are hired and fired under similar conditions. Each representative has $255,144 a year to hire as many as 18 staff members; senators average more than twice that much. Committee chairmen control hundreds of thousands of dollars for still more staff. All of these employees serve at the members' will—or whim.

One assistant to former Connecticut Senator Thomas Dodd came late to work day after day with dirt under his fingernails; he was spending his early morning hours digging out the basement of Dodd's Georgetown home. An aide to another senator was ordered to rent a U-Haul truck and move furniture into his boss' new house. Secretaries report that they regularly shop for congressmen's groceries, clean their houses and take their cars to be repaired. A House member recently dispatched a legislative assistant to bury his daughter's dead cat.

Most of the country has come a long way since that June day in 1964 when, after years of marches, murders, demonstrations, sit-ins and a tortuous debate in the U.S. Congress, the Civil Rights Act finally passed into law. It mandated a sweeping social reform: public accommodations were to be opened to all races; hiring was to be done without regard to race or to sex. And its historic provisions would apply to all.

Except to Congress itself. It was a matter of conscience and justice—"an idea whose time has come," boomed Everett Dirksen—to legislate fair employment for the rest of the nation. But for themselves, the legislators had a better idea—a loophole exempting their own decisions to hire and fire the thousands of congressional employees on Capitol Hill.

Last year, a dozen summers after the enactment of the Civil Rights Act, Representatives Patricia Schroeder and Charles Rose circulated a voluntary fair-employment pledge among House members. Less than a quarter of their colleagues would sign; the refusers included Peter Rodino of New Jersey, John Brademas of Indiana and James Corman of California, the three men who fought hardest in 1964 to outlaw everyone else's discriminatory hiring.

Because members of Congress can hire and fire so cavalierly, the Hays scandal stirred a wave of speculation about sexual imperialism on the Hill. But that represents just one facet of congressional discrimination against women and minorities.

Not long ago, a former congressman visiting the House floor shook his head despondently at the sight of female pages. "It never would have happened," he said, "when Sam Rayburn was here." The fact is that many members still hire as though they were living in the Rayburn age. As recently as 1974, at least 20

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Well, Vantage just wouldn't go along with that.

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New Vantage Longs. A blend of flavor-rich tobaccos with tar levels held down to the point where good taste still comes through.

That's the Vantage point. And that's the point of Vantage Longs. Never before has there been a long cigarette quite like it.

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congressmen had job descriptions on file with the House Placement Office requesting applicants who were "young," "attractive" or "white only." (Nine of the 20 had voted for the Civil Rights Amendments of 1972.)

Currently, 30 senators' offices employ only men at the higher salary levels; women on professional staffs throughout the Senate earn an average of $5,500 less than men. Last fall, a woman applying to be a legislative assistant in one office was told flatly that the congressman, a liberal Democrat, "doesn't want to hire a woman."

Following the Hays imbroglio, the House passed a rule to prohibit employment bias, but provided no effective redress for violations. In a meeting with the Capitol Hill Women's Caucus, Speaker O'Neill professed complete ignorance of the rule. The Senate has a similar rule, one with even fewer provisions for enforcement than the House.

In January, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals held that former Congressman Otto Passman of Louisiana had violated the equal protection provision of the Constitution when he fired an administrative assistant solely because she was a she. Passman outright admitted that reason in a letter, and so the ruling will have limited application, even if it survives. Which it may not: many of Passman's ex-colleagues, liberals and conservatives alike, are urging him to appeal on the grounds that members of Congress are immune from such suits—that, in effect, as the Circuit Court characterized Passman's claim, "his congressional status endows him with an unlimited right to discriminate." A senator says, "It's one thing to tell private industry what to do, but you don't start fooling with colleagues' staffs. That just isn't done."

House Administration Chairman Frank Thompson says that he believes in fair-employment practices, but adds that sponsoring a bill to subject Congress to fair employment "would blow the dome right off this place." The Women's Caucus has been searching for sponsors for just such a bill, but are encountering rampant reluctance. "A few members are 'thinking about it,' " reports Kathy Bishop, an officer of the caucus. "One of them said to us, 'I agree with you, but you're crazy. It will never pass.' "

Statistics of congressional employment for minorities other than women are nonexistent. Congress, having ordered the Civil Rights Commission to survey discrimination in the private sector, has never reviewed its own practices.

"They would be afraid to," says a black legislative assistant. "You see a lot of blacks working around here"—Washington is 70 percent black—"but mostly in menial and clerical jobs." In the sub-basements of Congress, *Roots* seems closer to reality than to history.

When the Senate reconvenes each year, there are several new waitresses in the dining room; their predecessors (like them, almost all black) have been laid off for the adjournment. Restaurant workers reportedly have been fired for labor protests; such dismissals are illegal under the National Labor Relations Act, but Congress has exempted itself from that law, too.

As chairman of the committee that administers House operations, Frank Thompson is concerned about the practice of "putting service employees out into the street." He kept waitresses on the job during the last adjournment by opening dining rooms to the public. But it was an act of noblesse oblige and a future chairman could reverse it, since Thompson did not move to make his exception a permanent House rule.

House beauty shop operators are worse off than the waitresses. They have no health insurance, no life insurance, no pension plan—and, incredibly, no wages; they work on commission, styling men's hair (for example, Mo Udall's) as well as women's. To attract support for better working conditions, they recently offered free haircuts to all congressmen.

Yvonne Burke, the chairperson of the Select Committee on the Beauty Shop (yes, Virginia . . .), has been trying to persuade the Administration Committee to provide a reasonable level of wages and benefits for beauty shop personnel. Wayne Hays, former chairman of the committee, was adamantly opposed to the idea. Frank Thompson has promised to hold hearings on the matter, but the hearings seem to be in a state of perpetual postponement. "Some members," says Yvonne Burke, "feel the beauty shop employees will lose their incentive if they don't have to depend on commissions." ●

notorious of such trips, but they are by no means unique. The South African Information Service funded $5,000 journeys for powerful House members Richard Ichord and John Dent, the latter a staunch defender of the apartheid regime's policies. In 1973, the Brazilian junta paid for the entire visit, including air fare, of a delegation from the House Agriculture Committee, which has jurisdiction over coffee imports. Such foreign largesse is illegal—in fact, it's unconstitutional. But no one investigated, much less prosecuted, the congressional violators. "Hell, they wouldn't even look at the Korean mess except for the press," says a House Republican, "and all they want to do now is to contain it. It's like letting John Mitchell investigate Watergate."

The House is now considering one minor reform of congressional tourism—a ban on lameducking, the practice of members leaving office via a final fling of "official business" abroad. Again, it is a case of reform under media fire, which focused on lameducking last November after Pennsylvania's retiring Thomas "Doc" Morgan, a colleague and their wives went on a whirlwind trip around the Far East.

Still, everything isn't always wine and roses for congressional tourists; there are occasional setbacks on the road. Four months ago, a visiting Senate delegation was invited to dine with the Shah of Iran. It was, recalls one senator, "the meal to end all meals." For every guest, there were two liveried waiters. The plates were gold, and the feast lasted four hours. After the last of the many sumptuous courses, a beautifully embossed, burnished gold humidor was brought to the table. Having been proffered magnificent Havana cigars in Egypt a few days earlier, the senators eagerly anticipated more of the same now. But it was not to be. The Shah was honoring that congressional embargo on Cuban goods. Reaching into the regal humidor, each senator in his turn concealed a sharp wince as he discovered row after row of . . . *El Productos*.

Such hardships are rare, however, and foreign travel remains almost the best fringe benefit of the congressional life. But not the very best, for built into the system are certain perks that enable most members to perpetuate themselves in Congress, there to enjoy for years all of the other perks. "One reason they won't pass public financing of congressional elections," says Common Cause's Fred Wertheimer, "is that in effect it already exists for incumbents."

I Mail, Therefore I Am

Probably Congress' most useful and misused privilege is the frank—the freedom to mail almost anything for nothing. Concedes one congressman, "It puts our opponents at a devastating disadvantage." Incoming mail to House members last year totaled about 25 million pieces, outgoing mail over 350 million; the huge margin of difference is due largely to congressional variations of junk mailing. Representatives not only enjoy free mail privileges, but the House provides a $5,000 allowance for "constituent communication"—a euphemism for newsletters touting the members. In short, the public pays for their political advertising.

If they need a picture for a newsletter, or for a constituent, or even for a campaign brochure, the official House Democratic or Republican photographers will oblige. And the photo shops will design and then lay out the brochures. The operation cost 225,000 tax dollars in 1975; the Republican shop alone developed 200,000 prints that year, an average of 1,300 for each Republican in the House.

Hidden in the bowels of the Senate, a private television and recording studio features the most modern color camera equipment, make-up to soften unseemly senatorial lines, professional sets featuring fake books and fake windows facing a fake Capitol dome, and real directors to select the best camera angles and profiles. Subsidy for studio employee salaries: $308,000. Senators are charged only for the actual film or tape they use, though the studio has trouble collecting even that from some, and in a few cases has had to garnishee a retiring legislator's final paycheck. The House has a separate but equal studio; during its last session, 350 members used the facility, many of them many times over.

Typically, the end result of a taping session is a 15-minute report to constituents, mailed (free) to home-state TV stations. The stations run the videotapes as "public service" programming—that is, commercials for congressional "public servants."

The telephone is another useful political tool. House members are annually allotted 15,000 long-distance minutes, senators can have a free WATS line in both their offices and homes. Members can transfer their phone (and other) allowances from one category to another at their convenience; they can, for example, spend a portion of their office equipment money for newsletters. Or they can reduce staff salaries and take more than the allotted 32 trips home to keep in touch with the voters. Once home, they automatically have an extra $2,000 to spend—the sum they have voted themselves for "official expenses outside the District of Columbia."

(The transfers do have outer limits; Representative Larry Pressler stumbled upon them in 1975 when he called the House Administration Committee wondering if, instead of a trailer as a mobile office in his Great Plains district, could he maybe have a Ford Pinto? The answer was no, though Pressler may have expected better: after all, the Senate has a fleet of 13 Continental, Cadillac and Marquis limousines.)

Above It All

The congressional lifestyle is irresistibly seductive, steadily entrapping. "It feeds on itself," says South Dakota's Jim Abourezk. "Pretty soon people want to stay forever. A lot of them are afraid they can't find anything as comfortable and ego-gratifying anywhere else."

They're probably right. In few occupations, short of *Fortune* 500 corporate presidencies, are so many so anxious to stumble over each other serving so few. Abourezk is quitting after one term, partly because "a lot of it is so plastic and phony."

In 1977, the cost of maintaining Congress will exceed the municipal budget of Philadelphia

"The free plants and the rest of it are symptoms of a disease," says Gary Hart. "The disease is that you think you're somebody special. People court and serve you, and a lot of senators come to like it, to want and need it." Adds Common Cause's Wertheimer, "It's exceedingly difficult not to get imperial. The life is like an actor's, with adulation, public exposure and attention."

A congressional official, who has seen "hundreds of them come and go over the years," classifies some as "megalomaniacs—the ones who went into politics for the sense of power, the ones who want to be kings." During a visit to Washington even before he took his new seat in the Senate, Floridian Richard Stone barked a series of orders to the staff of the Senate's Democratic Campaign Committee. (Yes, that partisan committee and its Republican counterpart are publicly subsidized, as are similar House committees.) Finally one staff member barked back at Stone that they were there to help, not to wait on him. Even in casual conversation with colleagues, Stone often refers to himself in the third person. "He actually enjoys presiding over the Senate," says one of them. "It's the most tedious assignment in the world—the only conceivable reward is sitting up there and looking important; we ought to give him a lifetime golden gavel."

Others also come to Congress predisposed to self-importance. "What aggrieves the ex-governors in the Senate," Gary Hart observes, "is that there is not enough splendor; they remember the statehouse." But the special cases are not that different from the general rule; the system can get to anyone—and usually does. "You notice the royalism most at the outset," continues Hart, now beginning his third year in the Senate, "but soon it's easy to think of it as just a fact of life. Taken together, the penny-ante things have an isolating, insulating influence. For some people, it takes five minutes to succumb; for others, five years. I only hope I have it under control for myself."

Two-term Congressman George Miller of California worries that after a while, "issues can just become numbers and words on pieces of paper." "We've all been dipped in warm honey around here," he says, his eyes sweeping the plush House dining room, "and it's comfortable. You gradually get on their timetable. A million or so more fall below the poverty level, and nothing happens except speeches. The coal companies are ripping up the countryside and one of their people lies at a hearing and everyone thanks him for his nice testimony. You lose the capacity for outrage."

"We don't have to live with the consequences of our actions, or inaction, except politically," Abourezk concludes. "You lose touch with what it's like out there. You come to believe that you really *are* better than the people who sent you here."

The pervasive sense of congressional separateness extends even to catching airplanes. While most Washingtonians must pay to park at an airport lot hundreds of yards from the terminals, congresspersons park in a special free lot a stone's throw (even by the weakened arm of the most senior senator) from the ticket counters. If a member is late for a flight, the airlines—though they deny it for the record—will agree to hold the plane.

"Because we live differently, we tend to care less," concedes a veteran

senator. "Our lifestyle dulls our sensibilities to the problems of ordinary people. And as you come to discover that you can't accomplish much, that your colleagues don't care and don't want to rock the boat, the perks become more and more important; the place becomes more important than policy. You come to value the job for its own sake and the rest is a sideshow."

The psychological value of the congressional good life is obviously high; considering what it costs, it should be. President Ford was understating the matter in his final State of the Union message when he attacked "the million-dollar Congress." This year, it will cost U.S. taxpayers at least a million and a half dollars to finance each Capitol Hill legislator. Congress clearly believes that God helps those who help themselves; for 1977, it has appropriated almost a billion dollars to maintain itself, shoeshines and all, a total that exceeds the entire municipal budget of Philadelphia.

Some congressmen defend their costly lifestyle by pointing to business executives. "They have their gyms, their expense-account lunches, all the little extras," says one six-term representative. "Why shouldn't we?" Counters a younger member, "Congress isn't a corporation; we're spending taxes, not profits."

Silence Is Green

Precisely how Congress spends those taxes on itself is often impossible to determine. The same legislators who thunder against executive branch secrecy can be very tight-lipped about their own privileges. Few members are willing to speak on the record about the subject. "I think a lot of this stinks," pleads one, "but I've got to get along around here."

By exempting itself from the Freedom of Information Act, Congress can and does withhold the facts about its own operations. Self-exemption from fair-employment laws (see box on page 28) enforces silence among congressional employees, who talk at the risk of their jobs—and so don't. The congressional emporiums, from the barber shops to the recording studios—even the garages—are off-limits to reporters and photographers.

Congress has insisted that cabinet appointees disclose their personal finances as a prerequisite of confirmation, but a disclosure bill covering senators and representatives was bottled up for two years in the House Judiciary Committee (the same committee that moved to impeach Richard Nixon for financial improprieties). Until recently, public reports on in-office spending by individual members of the House showed only that a member had spent so much on a given date, not what it was for; thus, there was no way of determining what had been taken from his office allowance for office expenses and what had been taken as extra personal income. In the Senate, spending reports can be almost impossible to decipher; the Culver Commission had to review 260 single-spaced pages, filled with irrelevant data, to figure out the 1976 disbursements to one minor committee.

The most intriguing congressional stonewall may be the one that surrounds the old congressional hotel three blocks from the Capitol, which the House bought supposedly for "office space." Instead, it rents the first floor to the Democratic Club, a private restaurant and watering hole for lobbyists and legislators. The club also leases the building's top-floor apartments and in turn subleases them at bargain rates to a few chosen House members. Wayne Hays retreated to his rooms there the afternoon before he attempted suicide last year. Current tenants include Daniel Flood, Tom Steed and John Dent, all congressional hierarchs, plus two newcomers, Helen Meyner of New Jersey and Father Robert Cornell of Wisconsin.

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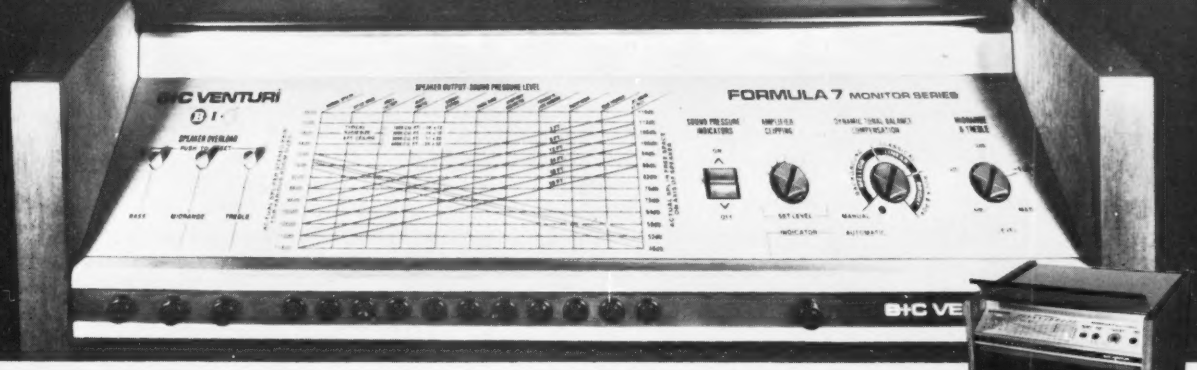

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TOMORROW'S TECHNOLOGY TODAY

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Nobody knows—or at least nobody will tell—the terms of leasing this public property to a private club. Joel Jankowsky in the Speaker's office says he can't remember. "It's been a while since I've seen the lease. Check with the Capitol Architect's office." Elliott Carroll, executive assistant to the architect, says, "We refer all calls on this to the Democratic Club itself. As the lessee, they have the information." Doesn't Congress, as the lessor, also have the information? "I'm not answering that." Why not? "Because my boss says I can't. Besides, I dislike all these journalists trying to embarrass Congress." Another House official thinks there is something to be embarrassed about. When he tried to look into the lease, all he learned was that the club's president is John Mahoney, a lobbyist for the American Medical Association; he suspects "a sweetheart arrangement." Mahoney will not answer questions; the manager of the club has nothing to say.

House Administration Chairman Frank Thompson explains the presence of the club and the apartments this way: "The Architect never thought to do an engineering study before we bought the building. The floors just won't hold the weight of heavy office equipment." As to the terms of the lease, Thompson answers, "I've tried to find out, but I can't." ("The boys will love him for that one," cracks another member.)

The boys protect their own. (The gals, too.) Dirty congressional linen is aired only under duress, and reform is something to be reserved for the executive branch and welfare cheats; if it *must* be self-applied, it will be the minimum necessary reform at moments of maximum public criticism. "What limited rules of conduct exist in any formal sense," says Miriam Dorsey, chairperson of the Capitol Hill Women's Caucus, "were accepted only in the heat of public outrage over scandalous abuses."

Just so. This January, the House Democratic Caucus finally deposed Florida Congressman Robert Sikes as chairman of the Military Construction Subcommittee for a series of blatant conflicts of interest—but only over Speaker O'Neill's opposition; O'Neill thought it was penalty enough that Sikes already had been "reprimanded." The decisive factor in bringing down Sikes, admits one congressman, "was not that the House was suddenly ethics-stricken, but that the press was watching closely—every newspaper seemed to have an editorial."

(Inadvertently confirming that analysis, senior Representative John Dent, a Sikes defender, blurted during the caucus debate: "I can give you a list of violations ten feet long by other members." House Ethics Chairman John Flynt—another Sikes defender—didn't ask for the list.)

Late one afternoon last June, in the midst of the Wayne Hays scandal, House Democratic leaders gathered informally to discuss how to "get on top" of the reform issue without "going crazy on reform," as Tip O'Neill delicately put it. The House, the leaders decided, would set up a commission to report back in a year and a half. By then, O'Neill estimated, tempers would have cooled and reporters would be looking elsewhere for their Pulitzer Prizes.

O'Neill picked Representative David Obey to head the reform body. "Obey does exactly what O'Neill tells him to do," says a close observer of the commission's work, "and at first the Speaker wanted him to play for time." One promising tactic was for the commission to spend $53,500 on a Louis Harris survey of what the country thought of the Congress. 'Not much," a House member ruefully guessed in advance. Indeed: Harris' February results showed that the public ranks congressional ethics lower than those of eight other major institutions, including state legislatures, perennially considered the Augean stables of American politics.

Said Speaker O'Neill, "I'm against any deal I'm not in on"

Amid the storm over Hays, the House felt obliged to offer a few immediate tokens. Thus, members no longer can collect their expense accounts without filing vouchers for them. Nor can they continue to convert their annual $6,500 stationery allowances into cash income; this modest restriction became almost mandatory after the press discovered that classic congressional penny-pincher H.R. Gross of Iowa (who objected to the government paying for JFK's funeral) had taken $23,000 of accumulated stationery funds with him into retirement. Frank Thompson, Hays' successor as chairman of the House Administration Committee, says the restriction nonetheless caused resentment among older members: "They hated like hell to lose the cash-outs, but under the circumstances they couldn't bitch about it publicly."

More recently, public pressure to tie the 30 percent congressional pay raise to reform has produced more grudging motion. "Suddenly," says a House insider, "O'Neill needed a reform package to help put the pay hike across; the members wanted the raise so badly they were drooling. So O'Neill told Obey that he wanted an ethics package now"—ten months before the originally scheduled reporting date. That package, which the full House will consider this month, includes several important provisions: full disclosure of members' incomes, limits on outside income and the abolition of "office accounts" (slush funds) financed by outside contributors.

Still the House clings hard to its old habit of minimum reform. The office accounts are to be replaced with an extra $5,000 of public money. ("Obey had to do that," a friend explains. "Tip promised it to the guys.") And according to the present timetable, none of the proposed reforms would take effect until 1979.

Congress' very own Watergate, the Korean bribes, is the other reason for O'Neill's sudden interest in speedy reform. "It's mostly Democrats who are involved," reports one of them. "We could lose 60 seats in 1978. The Speaker wants to make a record on reform before the Justice Department indicts any members." The Speaker has a few bases of his own to cover as well; he was once the guest of honor at a lavish birthday bash hosted by Korean fixer Tong Sun Park. "I'm against any deal I'm not in on," reformer O'Neill has said.

Mr. Sam's Ghost

The scripture according to Sam Rayburn—"get along by going along"—remains the prevailing congressional gospel, and it continues to defeat, delay and dilute reform from within. "What can you expect," asks one member, "from a Congress in which the chairmen of the Senate and House Ethics Committees each accepted hunting-lodge weekends from defense contractors?"

The final responsibility for the imperial Congress rests, of course, with the voters. Wayne Hays' Ohio district was fully prepared to reelect him, Liz Ray or not. After being reprimanded by his colleagues for his conflicts of interest, Congressman Sikes won reelection to his Florida seat—without opposition. As one congressman notes, "Of the 10 or so House members charged with ethics violations last year, 8 or 9 of them are back. What does that say about what the people really want?" The late Adlai Stevenson said it best: "Your public servants serve you right."●

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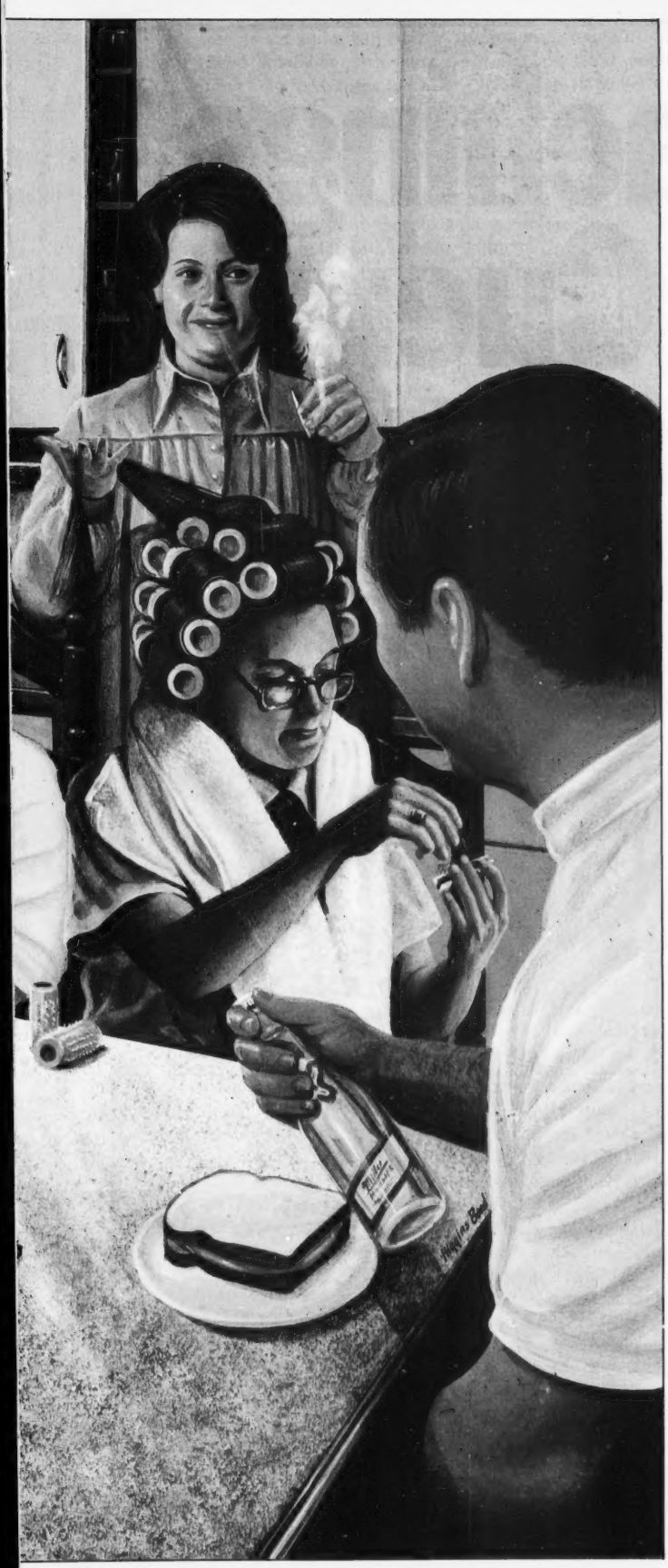

In Missouri, getting high and staying straight are synonymous **By Michael Wolff**

SMOKE CITY

It promised to be a decent, if predictable, story: a few small-town boys had discovered Getting High, the Grateful Dead and Vandalism. The peg would be 'Dope is Now Playing the Boonies.' Marijuana, yesterday's rolling papers, had surfaced in a high school in a rural, lily-white town called House Springs, Missouri. Before my plane set down in St. Louis, I was already anticipating a lecture from the local PTA president and assurances from the small-town police chief that everything was under control, that the "trouble" was limited to an unsavory handful.

So I wasn't prepared at all to find House Springs thoroughly saturated with killer smoke, as whacked as any Haight Street living room in 1967. Yet House Springs was still . . . well . . . *House Springs*.

It is eleven now, lunchtime, and George, who pours cement for a living and who sits in the luncheonette across the street from the school superintendent's office when work is slow, suggests we go over to his house for sandwiches, though, he remembers, "the wife probably has the girls in."

George is 25, but because he has worked near five years, been in the army two, married three, with two children and another on the way, he is no longer considered young. Margie, who is George's wife, short and chubby and 22, is at the kitchen sink washing Marilyn's hair, getting ready to put it up in cannon-size rollers. At the yellow, pink-and-blue-flecked Formica table, Doris, a neighbor, is bottle-feeding a young child; Donna is cutting green beans and, intermittently, baby-talking to her son Jimmy, who is old enough to pad around the floor, and Peggy is fitting lunch meat to pieces of Wonder Bread. There are five other children playing out in the backyard.

"Nothing doin' today," George says as he passes Margie, tossing his sweat hat onto the counter.

"Well, ya did $3.80 an hour last week," Margie shrugs.

"Hey, George," Peggy says, "Ron is settin' somethin' up over by Fenton."

"You think he needs anybody?" Margie asks.

The Teachings of Jose Cuervo.

(as excerpted from Chapter 27 of The Book.)

Yes, Chapter 27, wherein it says that Jose Cuervo is not only the original, since 1795, supreme, premium, ultimate white tequila. But, goes on to say that Jose Cuervo, as the ultimate, is also the ultimate mixer.

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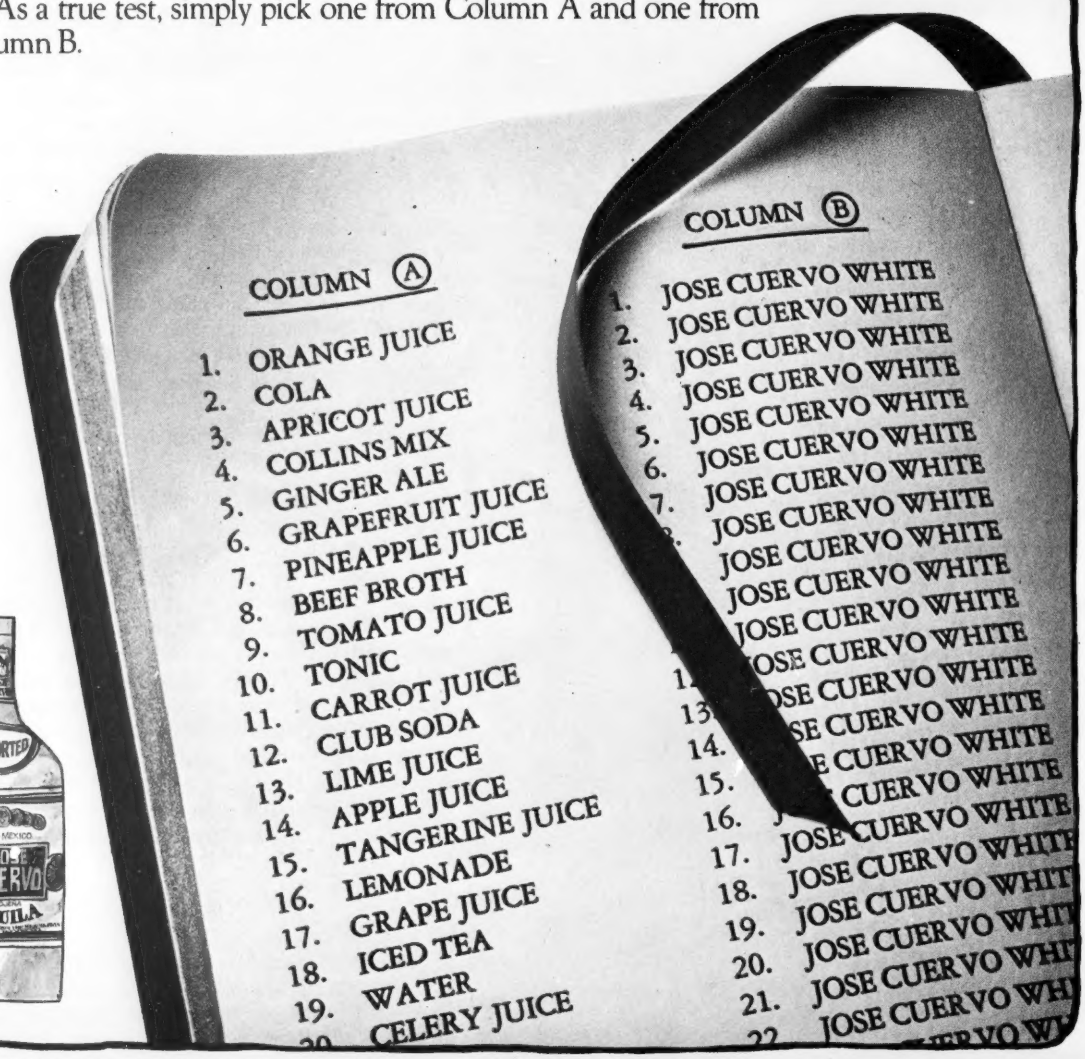

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"He was gonna go in with Ricky but Ricky found somethin' else more steady. Can't but help for George to call him."

"Those sandwiches ready yet?" Margie calls, the tap water running through Marilyn's hair.

These are women's hours, and George knows enough to fade to the outer reaches of the kitchen, mindful not to disturb the coffee-klatch as he washes down his Wonder Bread with a bottle of beer.

"Be a little helpful around the house, honey," Margie calls from the sink to George, "Whydoncha do some rollin'. You're better at it than me, anyway."

It is done with matter-of-factness, but still it is a jolt to witness a man made of all those outlying American ethics, in a room of Midwest mothers, wives and Clairol, rolling a joint. But it is nothing, nothing really to pause about: marijuana, toked between bites of liverwurst and boiled ham and turkey loaf, will not make a revolution in the doldrums of this kitchen.

"Coffee's good, Marge," says Doris, passing the joint. "You ever try that orange cappuccino stuff, or however ya say it? Ya know they had a real nice display of it, you just add water."

"Tom hates that kind of fancy stuff," adds Marilyn, taking the joint as Margie combs out her hair. "He'd just about die if I gave him anything but his Maxim."

Donna, taking a short toke and bending her head to Jimmy, who is sharing her liverwurst sandwich: "Don't hold it in your mouth,swallow now—it's good, goody-good, yummy. See, Mommy like it—umm."

And George, taking a long drag: "Saw a nig over to the car wash, he was dressed pretty good too."

And Margie: "Hope Arnie not thinkin' a sellin' to coloreds."

Doris: "Not Arnie, for sure."

Peggy: "Lemme have a little bobby pin to hold this, burnin' down to my fingers. Get them all yellowish and brown if ya don't watch out."

The short, peculiar history of marijuana, condensed, goes something like this: first it was black, being a secret of the ghetto and jazz musicians it motivated, then, the language of the hip, adopted by the white Negroes of Mailer's description; it found its way into rock and roll and agitated political expression, soon began to travel with a more mass version of hip, reached the well-endowed campuses, was picked up by FM stations and then, in haste, by the major media outlets, and moved, like a marketing trend, into affluent suburban communities, becoming a wonderful melodrama for the adolescents of Montclair, N.J., Philadelphia's Main Line, the white suburbs of Chicago, Westchester, and every expensive prep school in the nation.

It maintained, in its popularization, an enormous conceit: it allowed upwardly mobile, middle-class citizens to believe they could better themselves, become something other—riskier, brighter, better in bed—than laundered, dull, unloved white Americans.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JIM FORBES

One toke over the line: Marijuana grows freely near the center of town. But nothing—not the ambitions or language or pastimes—has changed

But the mythology began to mutate, say around 1970. Marijuana had moved from blacks to hip to music to politics to students to children and suddenly found itself chic: first, Hollywood executives, television producers and advertising people; and, from their cocktail parties, doctors, lawyers, M.B.A.'s, newspaper columnists, politicians.

Yet one conceit that did manage to hold on, a conceit more of class than of substance, was that it still remained the property of the smart, the quick, the knowing. If it no longer provided a way out of the middle class, it at least could distinguish the humdrum liberal from Nixon.

There was no inkling in the history of drugs, or from one's own experience, that in the low, back hills of Missouri one would find a renewed life, a welcome home, and a radically different personality for marijuana.

The facts are not at all hidden. It is just a matter of arriving here to find that marijuana is at peace in House Springs. It is not a secret, it is in the open, it grows freely; its illegality is not a problem, the arm of the law here is most often someone's cousin. There is some cocaine in House Springs, very little junk, seldom any chemicals; exotica is too expensive. They drink beer here, not Chivas Regal. A teacher in the high school does not doubt that it is used by every student, and guesses that for the whole community the number is one out of two. "It ain't nothin' I get my skin up about," says Mrs. Sanders, the mother of four boys and a girl, whose husband does a little farming, a little laboring, "just as long as they don't get rowdy at home."

I doubt House Springs is a rarefied enclave. It is rural and mostly poor, but not isolated. Its boundaries, officially, spread out across 121 square miles of subdivision. The town itself, an hour out of St. Louis, is a crossroad of 400 people; the high school is there, a reorganized district school, which means that House Springs is not a dot on the map at all, but 3,000 miles of bus routes. It is a gerrymandered cutout of Jefferson County, a figment of an administrative imagination. It is nothing really, except a random piece of the Midwest: a Mobil station, of course, a small grocery, a luncheonette, two beer taverns, a Baptist church, and a window,cut into the side of a shack, with a fly screen that opens so a girl can hand out your soft ice cream.

Michael Wolff, a freelance writer, last wrote a profile on Sissy Spacek for New Times.

To reinvest the mythology a moment, the two-lane road that wings west through here would not be an unlikely place for Peter Fonda to have been blown off his mythic motorcycle. "We get hippies comin' through now and again," said the Mobil station attendant who, on this Sunday morning, had just flicked a roach, the way one might flick the last few millimeters of a Lucky Strike, into a puddle of gassy water. "We rough 'em up."

The Baptist church is lightly built of thin shingle wood, and on a hot day like this its aluminum front door is left open. The hymns leak outside and sink into the grass and crumbled road tar. The streets, except for the hymns, are quiet; except for the dogs, deserted. Now is perhaps the only time a stranger can ride through the House Springs back roads in a clean, fat rent-a-car without catching mean stares.

Still, it is a relaxed Sunday morning, and a pleasant drive. One is seeing the Midwest again and remembering that it occupied a fair portion of the country, but there is not much to stoke this history, except—and the field is so calm and light green and so clearly at home that one almost doesn't think to pause—several acres of cannabis growing nicely in the Midwest sun.

One has watched for just the least hint of marijuana's venerable character, a little paranoia would do, but not a trace is to be found. Marijuana has not divorced these people from their values, nor suggested a new language in House Springs; it just gets you high here and then subsides. George, on a job hunt "up to a hole where they're doin' some diggin'," helps fill the gap in this history:

"I got to Nam, like a lotta boys around here, and ya made a good buddy, and after awhile ya found out he was smokin' and all, and there being nothin' to do, no national security if ya can know what I mean, and ya got to figurin', hell, if he does it and he ain't crazy . . . and the beer wasn't too great there, so ya tried it, and ya found out this stuff don't make ya go friggin' loony or nothin'. No different from ten beers, and no full belly.

"So ya come home and brought some with ya, and you're bein' a little scared and all, but then ya find that other guys come home got the same ideas. But I didn't wanna go and disgrace my folks, so I sorta snuck around a little and mostly laid off. But then, back in '70 I think it was, an escaped POW came through town, big deal they made about him too, shook President Nixon's hand an' all, and then it got found out that he smoked grass. At first folks was quiet about it, saying nothin', like it was a secret, but everybody knew. But then, after he left, folks started to talk, like got to wonderin' what it was like, and a few other vets admitted, hell, when they was in Nam course they smoked, wasn't nobody who didn't smoke. So sittin' at the bar the old guys would say, 'Well, what was it like, did ya see things, color and all?' And the vets said 'Naw, just made ya feel good, happy ya know.'

"And then one Saturday night, back, well, four, five years ago, at the tavern, during a big drinkin' night, well a guy who we call Zed whose been around here all his life, about 45 he is . . . a funny guy—ya know, like a reason folks go to the tavern is that Zed is there . . . but he's a guy too that everybody respects because he ain't afraid to speak his piece. Well, Zed got it good that night, musta put away 35 drafts, and he's practically fallin' off the stool and he starts in 'bout how he like to try hisself some pot, and everybody starts yelling, 'Yeah get Zed some pot, Zed the hippie,' and stuff like that, and then another vet who got the Purple Heart says 'Zed, you really want yourself some pot,' and Zed is yelling 'Sure do, sure do, wanna see me God.' And this other guy, the vet, he says to everybody, 'Well, whataya think, should we get ol' Zed higher than heaven?' And everybody is laughin' and screamin' and saying, 'Yeah, yeah, give ol' Zed a lookee at God.' So the vet, Pete his name is, opens his pouch, he always said it was a Viet Cong tit pouch, and he pours out some stuff on the bar, and everybody's still laughin' like hell, 'cause most thought it was really just Pete's chewin' tobacco, and then Pete takes out his rollin' papers, and, quick like, rolls up a big, fat joint and he says to Zed, 'Now ya gotta take it in, and hold it there good, like this.' And Zed says, 'Alright, alright, ain't no one gonna tell me how to smoke,' and he swipes the joint right outa Pete's hand, lights it up with his big silver gasoline lighter which he always uses and takes a big, down-deep drag, and of course, 'cause he never had it before, starts coughin' like an engine filled with sugar, which makes everybody just laugh all the harder, which gets ol' Zed's goat, and he says, 'Lemme get it again.' And he lights up and keeps it down this time, makin' faces like he's gonna die from holdin' his breath, and then he let's it all out and says, 'Shit, this is pussy stuff, don't do nothin', set me up another draft.' Which is when Harry, who pours cement too and is just an average guy says, 'Lemme try that stuff,' and he grabs away the joint, and coughs, chokes, and everybody's laughin'. And then I can't remember who takes it, but it starts to get passed around the room, and then Pete fixes up another. It went on like that pretty much all night, ya couldn't tell much if people were gettin' high because they were already high from the beer. But it was sorta there, I guess, that night, 'cause the word got around and stuff, that it was accepted an' all. Took awhile longer, a year maybe, before it was OK with the women, but pretty soon there wasn't no one who gave a hoot.

It's a jolt, witnessing an all-American man, in a room of Midwest mothers and Clairol, rolling a joint. But it's nothing: marijuana, toked between bits of liverwurst, won't make a revolution

"It's no big deal, illegal and stuff, but the cops around here just regular folks, doin' the same as everybody else doin', and we ain't got no dealers—it's just around, like Nam." And then George hesitates. "Why you askin' all these questions anyhow—you sure you ain't no government person or somethin'? Shit, it just ain't nothin', no one cares, so why do you?"

Because, for a good ol' eastern boy who had visited backass America in a former age in the history of marijuana, this is no small development. One came through here, or places that might as well be here, to act out the well-loved myths of marijuana, to cross the country as an outlaw, tempting a nation of rednecks and Hoosiers and speed-trap cops to draw their guns. It is always worth noting that the clear symbols of one's time have gotten mucked up.

"It no longer strikes me as peculiar that every redneck around here is blowing dope," reflects Lon Simmons. He is young, pleasantly ironical and intently political. He used to teach in the high school, but quit not long ago, got tired of bureaucratic discipline, of all conservative attitudes. He ran for the board of education, and, to his own amazement, won. "They like people here who don't wear a suit." He hauls landfill and continues to live in House Springs because, "I am at heart a rural boy, and I think I understand the people

here. I like the quiet, the slowness too."

"If you think about it, you can begin to realize why grass is really at home around here. People are violent and they tote guns, but they're afraid, afraid of St. Louis, afraid of the world. There are not many men here who could not be classified as alcholics, beer mostly, but beer sucked in until you drop. It makes them not so fearful, relieves the feeling that their backs are always near to broken from their crummy jobs. And let's face it, grass is better—easier to wake up in the morning, and your wife doesn't yell at you so much.

"It was strange at first to find the kids in my classes, kids who couldn't understand what all the counterculture talk was about, all higher than hell. Stranger to find out that their fathers were also blowing dope. But after a while it just became part of the landscape. No more to notice than a cigarette or a toothpick hanging from a mouth. You don't notice it any longer, because it changed nothing. Not the language, not the ambitions, not relations between parent and child, not anyone's point of view. I'm from the deep South and I've seen racism at its peak, and it is just as strong here, and marijuana has not made it any less powerful."

One makes a perfunctory call to the Jefferson County Sheriff's office to inquire about official policy. "Look, it's illegal, right?" says a deputy over the phone, and one wonders if he is overweight and fleshy and if he wears the classic sunglasses. "So whataya want me to say? It's illegal. But whataya want us to do, arrest the whole state? Look, if a kid gets in a mess of trouble, maybe we'll run him in for blowin' grass. But if he doesn't smash no windows, or do no breakin' and enterin', if he goes to school and does what he's supposed to do, and we find he's got a little stash—look, we got a lot more important things to handle."

And, of course, a visit to a local preacher: "I can think of many worse ways to stray."

Off the highway, on a weekday evening, following the Big River, which is a small stream, at best a rapid brook, through four miles of farm fields and shanty trailor lots, one reaches Twin Rivers Tavern, close to the point at which the Big River reaches the Meramec. It is a white bar. "No nig," says Edith Combs, the heavyset proprietor, "has ever set his foot in." It is not difficult to understand why any outsider, black or white, would turn back from Twin Rivers Tavern. It is a hutch, not even a house, just a busted down room with a sheet of aluminum to frame a porch. The sign is a 20-year-old red Coca-Cola disk, with the bar's name scratched in rough handwriting below. In the small gravel parking lot, there are only pick-up trucks, and long-used, wing-happy cars. At any time of the day there will be a gaggle of boys, shirtless, bending into the hood of a late fifties Chevy. On the stoop, sitting on the broken boards, one will always find four or five men drunk and drinking, blocking the door. It would take a lifetime of familiarity to feel safe stepping over their heads into the bar. But by the time the white Hertz is parked, it is too late to turn back. The teenagers have already surrounded the car, running their hands along the flawless fenders.

On the porch this evening, there is a band playing an odd mix of country-western and old acid rock. It is a bit of luck; one may circle instead of confronting the five Cerberuses at the tavern door. As I approach, wearing a suitjacket, a notebook reaching out of the pocket, the sound of the band distorts, the rhythm guitar player just stops and looks at the stranger, the drummer lets up on one stick and gazes. The patrons, children gathered around the tables with their mamas, men off at other tables, boys with their arms around their girls, pause at their beer drinking, their talking, their prattle to the children, and look, all of them, in my direction. It is a hot night, the sky is clear, the air is as dense with marijuana as the Fillmore was ten years ago.

A tall, dirty-blond young man, his moustache hanging into his mouth, moves toward me, blocks the entrance to the porch. We stand, sizing up each other. "You state man, aincha? Liquor authority? Well, my mama owns this place,

Reverend's waitin': On Sundays, before church, the men and boys of House Springs will stop by at the bar to have a few joints and some 3.2 beer

and 'fore you get to her you go through me," he says, and motions to several friends who slip out of their seats and surround me from behind.

And so the explanations start, unwieldy at first—the idea of a reporter does not dissuade them—and then faster, before the circle closes in. The wallet comes out, is handed around, and the only thing that seems to save me is that it is clear that I am really from New York, and Tom Combs, the owner's son, had an army buddy from the Bronx.

"Shit, I bet you even seen him," he yips, slapping his side. "That ol' kike musta been in every bar up North. Hey mama, we ever had a boy from New York City in? Come in, we'se really friendly folk."

Escorted, I get to step over the heads at the door.

"Hey, draw this boy a beer," he calls as we enter the tavern. "Bobby, Earl, Zed, you remember Rubin the Jew I told ya about? Well this boy who we thought was a liquor man is from up in New York, too. We got some pot here? Bring it, cause we got some greetin' to do."

"It's alright, this stuff," Tom Combs says to me. "Pro'bly nothin' like you got in New York, mostly we just got home grown, but sometimes we get somebody to go to St. Louis and get us some city pot. Anyway, it's good enough for us, we just mix it with our beer . . . Now take off that fancy jacket and be at home awhile. . . ."

What happens now is not much different from what happens when you swill down beer at any joint. The talk is full of instant camaraderie, but the tone is bullying, harshly rhetorical, and, at its edges, one suspects, dangerous.

"You think only dirty hippies can have the fun?" It is Earl, who is perhaps twenty-five, and missing a finger, who is talking. "We smoke it 'cause it's good, that right boys? Why, that don't make us hippies and drug addicts and queers. We get up in the morning and go to work. I think the niggers up north put somethin' in your stuff that makes ya all lazy bums."

The joints were never given much attention, just toked between sips, but as more joints went around the room, the talk calmed down, more a focus on one person's incessant monologue than a room of simultaneous ramblings. Getting high did not much change the subjects of the evening—welfare, nigs, nigger lovers—but the racism went from an habituated monosyllabic form to a more reflective, indeed, by comparison, almost cogent state. From: "That stick on the Big Riv' was big as a nig's prick," to a calmer language whose racism was the concentrated subject and not merely the sideshow metaphor.

Bobby, who is 19 and a senior in high school: "You know how we saw that nig on the highway, yeah, last week, and he was drivin' that Cadillac? Well, that was a pretty fine car and, ya know, that nig couldn't been nothin' much. Ah mean, I know they got some pretty ritzy nigs over in St. Louis, but this Cadillac had Georgia plates, and ya know they don't take to nigs drivin' big cars down in Georgia. Well I been gettin' to thinkin' that we shouldn'a been just standin' there rubbin' our toes like stupid ol' farmers, 'cause that Caddy was pro'bly hot as fire. We coulda got ourselves a nice reward. . . ."

And Zed, older and drunker and higher: "That ain't for sure the case, Bobby. You mighta got yourselves in a stew of trouble if you'da ripped that nigger outa that car, 'cause they got government programs now, even down in 'lanta, I hear, where they get the banks to sign up nigs for Cadillacs. It's that subversion they been talkin' about—you watch and see, they don't tell ya nothing 'bout it, but it's there alright. They call it redistribution, like they make the workin' people get those shitty little cars, and give the no-accounts the big ones. It's fact—I'm gonna show you the article. . . ."

"You think only dirty hippies can have fun?" asked one of the men at the bar. "We smoke 'cause it's good. That don't make us drug addicts"

On Sunday morning the House Springs crossroads is more active than it will be through the balance of the week. More hurried too: only a half-hour to be free before a two-hour stay in church.

The women and young children are in the luncheonette, stocking up on Lifesavers, and quickly licking down their soft ice cream.

The men are in the crossroads bar, 3.2 beer only. The ages range up from 16 to 60, the younger ones in shiny boots and Sunday Levis, the older men in white loafers, chalky from too much polish, and nubby suits, and white plastic belts, put around the waist not as decorative items but as cinches; the faces are red and drawn and skinny, and no one, along the ridge of his cheekbones, is without a vein that has burst into a stringy pattern of blue.

There is not a generation dilemma here; the effect of seeing boys and men in the same room, going about the same habits together, is that there can be no doubt that the young do become the old. There is a unanimity of language, of work, of homes; there is no conflict, no mystery about what the younger people will become.

The cigars are lit, and the chewing tobacco saliva-soaked, appearing briefly as it rounds around the front teeth from one cheek to the other, and the chain smokers light the next Lucky Strike from the butt of the current one, and pipes are doweled clean without bothering to remove them from the lips, and the head of the beer sucked in and the remaining foam lapped at with the tongue. Nothing at all is strange about this, not the sucking and pulling and licking, not that the men are irritable about another Sunday stuck with Jesus. Just another small town where the boys have nothing to do except busy their mouths.

And then, from stool to stool, sometimes skipping the older men, sometimes not, a joint is passed, and the heads along the bar lift back.

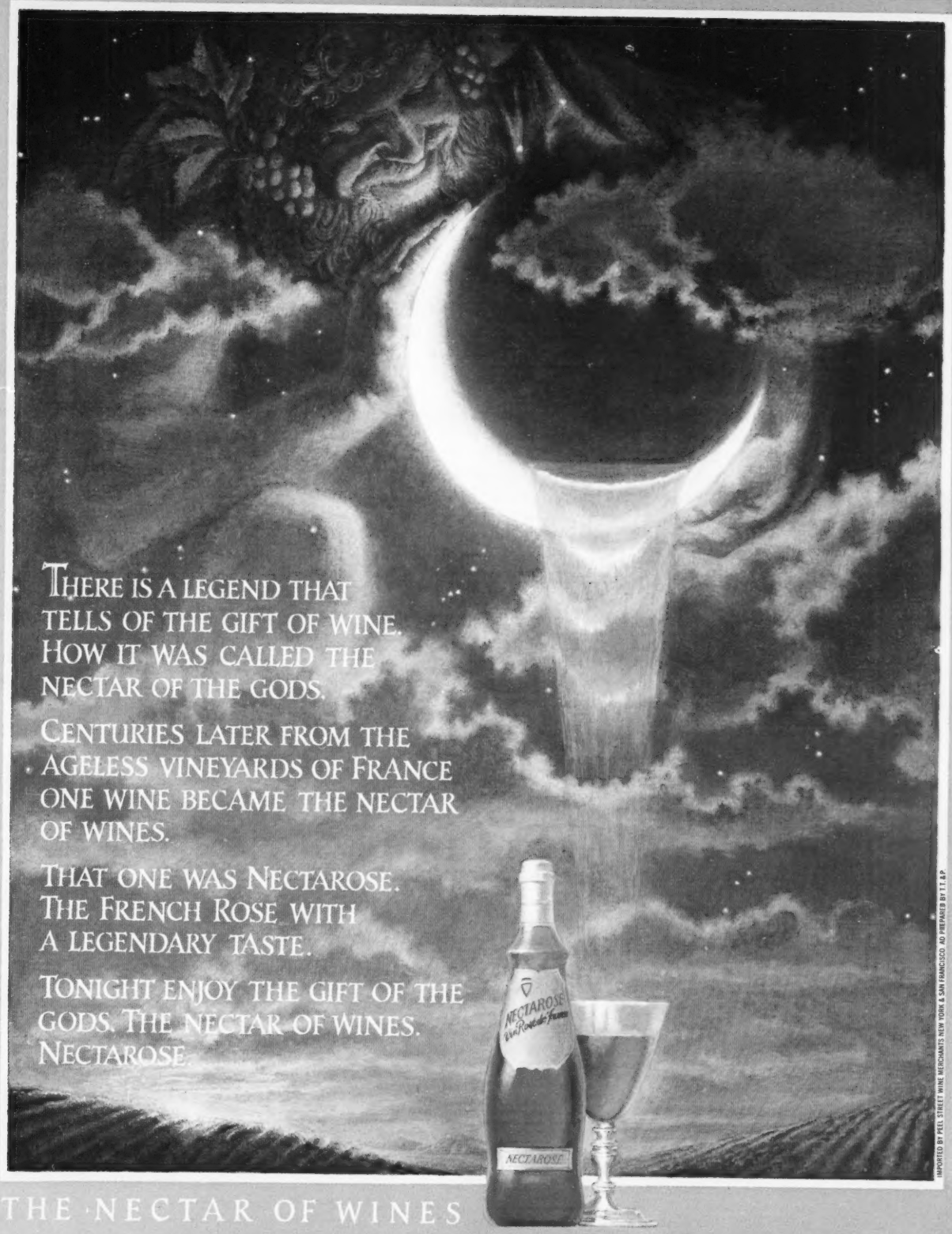
So what to make of this Sunday morning, in this brown-wood bar, that peculiar smoke as heavy here as the heat waves off the road tar? And what to make of House Springs, Missouri, and its casual pastime? In such an air of easy habit and unconfused community one ceases, soon enough, to find anything jarring, loses the perception of symbols run amuck. There is no ritual, the joint just passes from stool to stool, as worthy of a second's pause as a beer slapped on the counter, the ember of a cigar smothered. Just Sunday morning as usual. The bartender mops up. A few eyes glance toward the clock approaching nine. The jukebox flips off another disk and stops. The propellers of the wood fan continue. And still one waits, just sits and waits, for some meaning, some signal, a word that will bridge the currents of this history. The joint passes from an older man to a boy on the last stool.

And the boy says, matter-of-factly, "Fuck, Pa, ya nigger-lipped it."

And the older man returns, "Don't say *fuck*, I told ya."

And then a voice from a few stools down the counter: "C'mon you peckers, Reverend's waitin'."

Rising from the pews, one learns a truth: getting high does not change the beat of Baptist hymns.●


There is a legend that
tells of the gift of wine.
How it was called the
nectar of the gods.
Centuries later from the
ageless vineyards of France
one wine became the nectar
of wines.
That one was Nectarose.
The French Rose with
a legendary taste.
Tonight enjoy the gift of the
gods. The nectar of wines.
Nectarose.
NECTAROSE
Vin Rosé de France
NECTAROSE
IMPORTED BY PEEL STREET WINE MERCHANTS NEW YORK & SAN FRANCISCO AD PREPARED BY I.T.&P.

THE NECTAR OF WINES

NECTAROSE

NEW HOPE FOR THE DEAD

BY JESSE KORNBLUTH

BEHIND THE SCENES AT REBIRTH, INC.

Masochism sells. Here's how:

Rent a Manhattan brownstone at a good address, cover the walls and ceilings with heavy pads that would look good in the nut ward, and beat the legs and hips of society ladies until they scream for you to stop. Then call the place a "cellulite clinic" and make a fortune. Or lock 250 people into a hotel ballroom for a weekend, insist they're too stupid to realize they're-perfect-just-the-way-they-are, don't do anything else, and watch them embrace you like you've just led them out of the desert. Call this "educational philosophy" and gross $12 million a year.

Or, like San Francisco's Leonard Orr, be a little smoother. Combine the physical approach of the body faddists with the pop spiritualism of the human potential movement, and create an "experience" that capitalizes on this year's recurrent fantasy—the fever to be "born again." Orr, of course, improves on the Baptists' old dunk-em-in-the-river shtick. He's more a combination of John Denver and Margaret Mead. For the hip, urban market, he eliminates all embarrassing references to Jesus; instead, he cites the gentle, obstetric breakthrough of France's Dr. Frederick Leboyer, which offers next generation's parents the possibility of childbirth without trauma. Blissful, unspanked infants, splashing around in baths of warm water seconds after birth, are infinitely better off than those of us who were torn out of our mothers like stuffing out of turkeys. High-beam lights burnt our eyes while 70- to 80-degree temperatures froze our skins (it was about 99 degrees inside Mom); then something rubbery clasped our ankles, hung us upside down, and smacked our asses; the air actually hurt as we took our first breaths, and then, most horrible of all, *a sharp metal thing cut our connection to what we were most sure of*—our lifeline, Mom, love, food . . . .

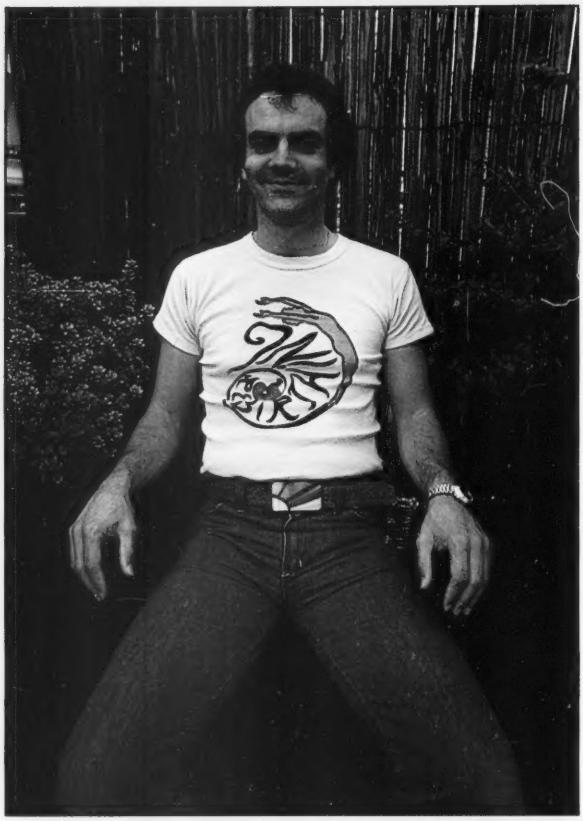
"In the womb you were perfect, and you knew it," Diane Hinterman, an Orr assistant, told a group of New Yorkers recently. "You were love. Then you were born and all hell broke loose. It's no surprise you invalidated the fact that you are love and reached a new conclusion about the world: *I'm not perfect.* And that idea will be eternal until you dissolve it or replace it."

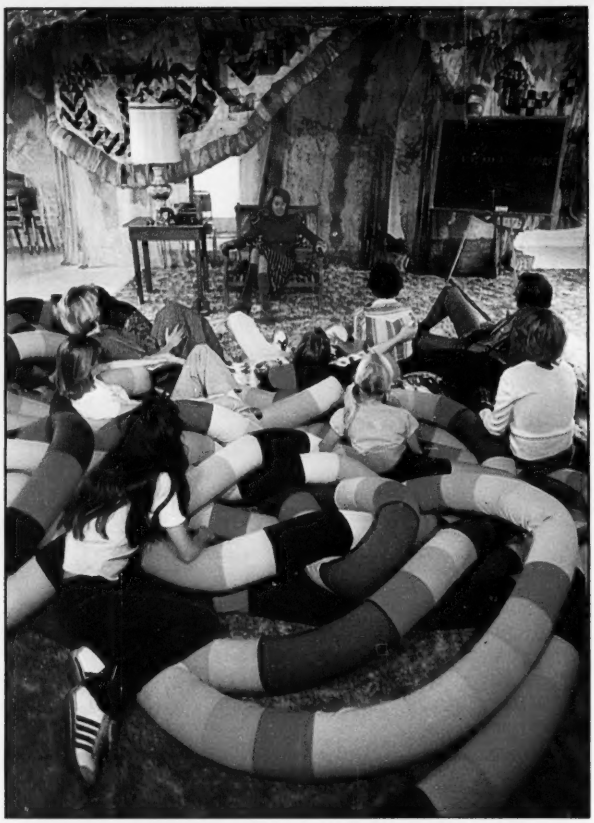
Most of us never get over our introduction to life, Orr says, but proposes that his rebirth method, "Happy Birth," will clear up lingering trauma for "those of us who can't go back."

The idea that most of us waste our lives "getting even" for our unhappy births is not staggeringly original, but Orr and his associates at Theta Seminars (corporate motto: "It's time to face Reality, Reality loves you") don't claim to be profound. All they have created, they say, is "physical and emotional support and a safe environment to experience whatever arises within you in association with your birth." This translates to a redwood tub overflowing with 99-degree ("womb temperature"), slightly chlorinated water; nose clips and a diving snorkel, a symbolic umbilical cord; a "rebirther" and an assistant, who strip and get into the tub with you and hold you when the heat begins to sear your lungs, when primal panic seizes your mind, and when uncontrollable spasms make you feel like Regan in the third reel of *The Exorcist.*

In the last two years, Happy Birth has been boffo box office. So far, more than 10,000 Americans have paid $50 for each of three dunks in the tub, and $10 for the required pre-rebirth seminar. Theta now has rebirthers working in twice as many cities as est has trainers. And as long as birth is, as R.D. Laing writes, "a major psychological disaster zone in which almost everything is done the exact opposite way from how

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER ANGELO SIMON





Happy Rebirthday: Leonard Orr, top left, says that traumatic births cause most of our troubles. So he urges people to rap, then jump into tubs of hot water and be born again. So far, he's grossed $1.6 million in two years

it would happen if allowed to," Leonard Orr is confident Theta will continue to flourish. "As long as there will be birth trauma," he says in the monotone that barely disguises his considerable amusement at Theta's success, "there will be rebirthing."

And rebirthing, of course, is only the first prong of Orr's attack on what he calls "the Five Biggies"—birth trauma, parental disapproval, the unconscious death urge, problems carried over from past lifetimes, and specific negativities that form your "case." The combination of these mental structures, Orr says, rules our lives. Break them and you will experience mastery of your body. You'll also be immortal.

But not, of course, right away. The first challenge is to endure the pre-rebirth seminar without dying of incredulity. Happily, Theta's clientele is a trusting bunch. During my visit, they nodded assent at everything Diane Hinterman uttered, as though the 21-year-old former mental hospital attendant was a certified *bodhisattva*. The fact that Orr's method owes most of its substance to Dr. Leboyer's book, *Birth Without Violence*, didn't seem to bother anyone, nor did I hear a single discouraging word about follow-up studies on post-rebirth flipouts or suicides (they exist). As prospective rebirthers shared their hopes for a regrooved consciousness with each other, it began to be clear to me why their smiles were so goofy, why they had no need to ask questions. They were already veterans of the Human Potential Wars. Through the Self-Improvement Grapevine, they'd already received the Relevant Data—they'd already heard how Ida Rolf, the inventor of the massage therapy that bears her name, had recently become Theta's oldest graduate. This counts for a lot with the Theta crowd, because "Werner"—that's est's Werner Erhard, granddaddy of San Francisco's kick-the-intellect-wherever-you-find-it enterprises—gives Rolfing as a bonus to employees who produce miraculous results for the corporate coffers. And it was est's Randy McNamara, who's probably harangued most of these people at least once, who was "playing" with Leonard Orr the afternoon he developed the actual technique of rebirthing. He trusted Leonard; after all, Leonard had worked for est as a consultant to Erhard, a guru's guru—or, some say, an in-house shrink.

The audience was presold. The "hard questions" Diane parried were about as tough as table tennis: "Is it OK to smoke dope before you do it?" someone wondered. "I may have rebirthed someone who was stoned," Diane giggled, "but they sure got clear before they came up." "Does it affect sex?" a woman asked hopefully. "I can't sleep with people who haven't been reborn—I paralyze 'em," Diane said with pride.

Just before the tea-and-cookies break, a troubled grad student asked the evening's only real question: "Maybe you can see when I'm really 'clean' of birth stuff, but how can I tell?"

Diane fixed him with a warm, loving smile, the human-potential equivalent of a firm handshake. "After rebirthing, you are life and you are love," she rhapsodized, "and what a beautiful place to be."

"Wow!" he exclaimed.

"Really!"

In the back row, I was already beginning to suspect I might flunk my rebirth.

Days later, when Diane's glamorous promises of a cleansed self-image—what cynics call a "pre-rinse"—had worn off, I went to take the plunge. With two other Theta clients, an 18-year-old from Greenwich, Conn., whose parents wanted him to share their Theta-assisted happiness and a beautiful, troubled woman in her early thirties, I hurried into the pre-rebirth room and instinctively began to take off my clothes. Wrong move. First we had to read an interview with Dr. Leboyer to get ourselves in the right frame of mind (psychologists call this "conditioning"). Then we could strip. We all looked disappointed, just like any trio of repressed neurotics who want to prove they're nonchalant.

After we'd "reactivated" our birth traumas with responsive readings of Leboyer's words of compassion, we finally got down to our skins and prepared ourselves for launching. We were drawing straws, in fact, for first-one-in when the phone rang: it was the woman's psychiatrist demanding that she leave this absurdity now. But she was hungrier for "value" than for approval, and volunteered to inaugurate the session. Diane said OK. She'd already told us Leonard Orr's feelings about Theta's responsibility: "I'm totally unwilling to take responsibility for whatever happens to people. If you're not totally willing to take responsibility for yourself, I don't want you."

Listening to the woman breathing through a snorkel wasn't very interesting, yet in the absence of other stimuli, I found myself meditating on the old in-

Jesse Kornbluth last wrote about Celestial Seasonings tea for New Times.

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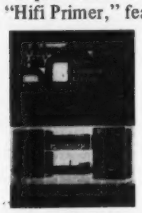

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Truth and its consequences: At Theta, you have to talk before you walk; then you become a marathon man

out as though it were the secret mantra of the universe. Even then, it was unimaginably boring. But suddenly she started panting like a soul singer and sliding around in the tub, moving her arms to a silent backbeat. Her hands locked. Moans like Moby Dick coming up for air reached the tub's surface. And then she collapsed.

Diane ripped off her shift and jumped into the tub, cradling New York's newest infant. She pulled the snorkel from her mouth. She comforted her. Nothing worked. Blond hair matted against her face, phlegm pouring from her nose, the woman wept and moaned uncontrollably.

I'd managed to miss primal therapy when Arthur Janov popularized that rant-and-rave technique a few years back, so I was stunned and appalled by this spectacle. Naturally enough, Diane chose me to go next. I resisted, made jokes, stalled for time. Diane was patient, but there was a Nurse Ratched side to her personality I hadn't noticed before, and while the first "rebirth" was still "unconscious," sprawled out on a bed of towels, I was adjusting noseclips and snorkel and bidding my old world goodbye.

And it was as nothing, breathing underwater; I inhaled and exhaled like a dolphin. An unlikely achievement, given my history: I was born underweight and premature. When I cry, you can see where the forceps clamped my forehead. With all of that, you'd think I'd be ripe for an underwater primal. I'd even thought of myself as a prime candidate for the rebirthing hall of fame. But after ten minutes, I was getting nowhere.

Just when I was sure there were no results to be had, it started. My hands began jerking like Joe Cocker's, signaling Diane I was going through a stage called "the creeping crud." My face contorted. No tears, no moaning, but an intense and terrible pain on my chest. Diane entered the tub and turned me over, hugging me from behind as she removed the snorkel from my mouth. It wasn't much in the way of assistance, but in that fear-filled zone, it was enough. "Once you get past this moment, which is the recreation of the umbilical cord being cut," Leonard Orr explained later, "you're through with the closest experience most people have had to actual death and you know you can survive." Sounds good, but at the time, all I thought was: people will pay to make fools of themselves, as long as you tell them they're "getting free" in the process.

After the third partner of our little group had flopped around in the tub, we all tried the waters a second time, but there were no more peak experiences to be had. Diane said we all dropped a lot of stuff, though; she knew that because she got plugged into our trips so thoroughly that while we pulled on our suddenly scratchy clothes and resumed our separate lives, she was going to have to rebirth herself to purge herself of our traumas. Until the next time—and my partners nodded affirmatively when Diane asked if we were interested in plunking down another fifty bucks for a second session—she advised us just to hang out with ourselves and marvel at the changes in our lives.

I noticed only one. In that stew of anxiety, I had sweated off a quick three pounds.

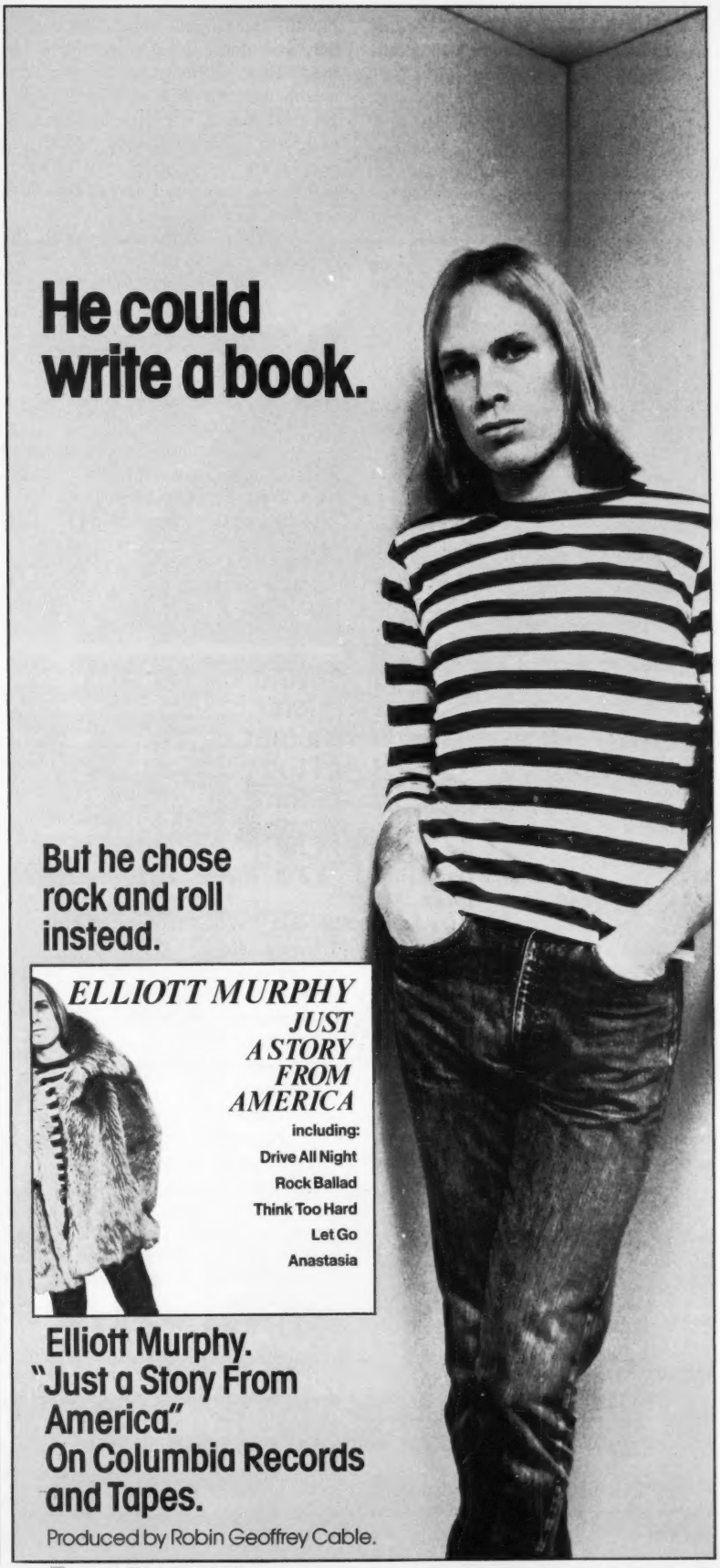
"Death," Charles Manson once said, "is psychosomatic."

"Death," Leonard Orr told me, propping his baby-blue suede loafers against the dining room table of Theta's San Francisco home office, "is a grave mistake. No one dies if they don't want to." Because Orr comes on like a New Age Perry Como, it was hard to tell at first whether he's a put-on artist or a genuine immortalist. Certainly it was less threatening to see him as a prankster;

with the beginnings of a thickening stomach, Orr hardly seemed the type for transformational athletics. But, Orr insisted, his own case isn't the standard by which Theta's program should be judged. "I don't promise that people can get immortality through me," he explained, "and whether I make it or not is irrelevant." What is crucial is mastery of the physical and mental planes, beginning with the release that rebirthing is supposed to provide. That's why Happy Birth candidates are routinely told it's only one part of the Theta cosmology. It may frighten some folks away, but to Orr, the reasoning is obvious: "You can never experience mastery of your body if you're intending to destroy it someday." So he'd like the world to think that although he's actually 37 years old, he's really 25, healthy and getting younger all the time. "Publicize anything else and you use mass suggestion against me."

Compared to Orr's prescription for immortality, his analysis of rebirthing sounds sane and rational. He acknowledges that the spasms may be caused by hyperventilation, but emphasizes that "you can only hyperventilate if you've been subventilating all your life." It doesn't have to be self-inflicted torture, he argues, if you can keep your wits about you and concentrate simply on your breathing. Perhaps. But when he talks about the disconcerting vibrating that people go through during rebirthing, the technique seems suspect again. There are, according to Orr, two infants trapped within each human embryo. One is spiritual and divine, the other traumatized and obsessed with the material world. During rebirthing, the life force takes that material negativity and shakes the divine infant free and clear. So rebirthing, for Orr, is "the ultimate healing experience—it cures the breath."

If all this begins to sound like Timothy Leary's biological half-truths and philosophical wishfulness, in the life story of Leonard Orr these ideas have a kind of coherence. He was the sixth child born to a mother who really wanted to stop at three. In honor of Leonard's conception, she gave up sex for good—which, Orr suggests, is why he stayed a virgin until he was 25. But he had, at 21, a more powerful experience than sex when he met a Los Angeles healer who had been a vegetable at the Mayo Clinic until a miraculous, invisible presence restored her to health. Her connection with "Infinite Intelligence" proved to Orr that repeated statements of hope—what Thetans call "affirmations"—are creative and can get you whatever you want. If that's true, Orr realized, human-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ity has brainwashed itself into choosing misery and we're all blindly killing ourselves with unconscious negativity.

Orr's introduction to the self-improvement business was, he now says, a great testimony to the power of subterranean self-destructiveness: He tried a positive thinking scam called the "International Success Center," and it was an immediate failure. Then his parents died. With his "death urge" gearing up to do him in, Orr recalls, he decided that his only hope was to figure out the mystery of his birth—so he went to bed for six months. While there, he wrote affirmations ("I am a lovable person," "I deserve to be wealthy"). Soon he no longer wanted to be his own worst enemy.

He began experimenting with "pro-life techniques." One afternoon, during a session in a sauna, Orr thought it might be interesting to stay in the heat until something happened. When he crawled out an hour later, he says, he understood exactly what the newborn infant experiences in childbirth. Critics suggest, however, that what Orr felt as he flopped around the floor, gasping like a deprived oxygen junkie, was the release Arthur Janov was selling in slightly different form as primal therapy. But by the time he'd put in his season with Werner Erhard, Janov was over and Leboyer was on the way; when Orr founded Theta in 1975, he was among the first to offer a focused physical approach to mental problems.

He was also among the first to run a human-potential enterprise as a non-exploitative business. In the past year, he has restructured Theta so his associates share the fruits—and burdens—of partnership. There are no volunteers; though the salary is minimal, Theta assistants are paid for their service. Rebirthers trained by Orr who decide to practice their craft elsewhere are encouraged to pay Theta 10 percent of their gross earnings for the first few years, but the arrangement is entirely negotiable. "I let anyone break agreements," Orr said, with a philosophical shrug.

The thrust of Orr's reorganizational efforts has been to prevent Theta's clientele from turning him into a guru. Orr makes no secret of his interest in making money; at his weekly money seminar, he takes attendance by asking each member for an earning's report. In exchange for helping them—invisibly—double their income over the course of the year-long seminar, Orr wants 10 percent of every dollar they make. "I like you to come to at least one meeting a month," he reminds them, "but remember, you don't have to attend to pay me." They get the point: the barrier to wealth isn't the lack of Leonard Orr's personal magic, it's their resistance to prosperity consciousness. Rebirthed people are responsible only to themselves, yet they *owe* Leonard for showing them the way.

So he can help make you rich. But can he get you reborn?

Sondra Ray, my second rebirther, is a sex therapist. The title of her new book is *I Deserve Love*. She's the archetypal California life-lover, thanks to Leonard Orr, and while talking to her, it's very hard to disagree.

The "miracle stories" that human potential entrepreneurs tell are usually too self-serving to be believed, but Sondra Ray's was an exception. She'd taken est, but unlike those who found their lives working perfectly after she "got it," she began regularly wrecking her car. A friend suggested Leonard Orr.

In return for helping his clientele double their income over the course of the year-long seminar, Orr wants 10 percent of every dollar they make

Orr said, "Write affirmations. Yours is, 'I have a safe car.'" That straightened out her driving. Having failed once at marriage, Sondra decided next to create a beautiful love affair. She wrote, "I deserve a lover." In no time, she met Marshall Summers, trained him to assist her in rebirthings, and cofounded a sex-counseling service.

Marshall and Sondra, it turned out, were going to share the tub with me. They knew I had doubts, but they were not concerned about them; what they wanted me to know was that they genuinely loved me and wanted me to share as much of their psychic freedom as I was able to handle.

Ideal.

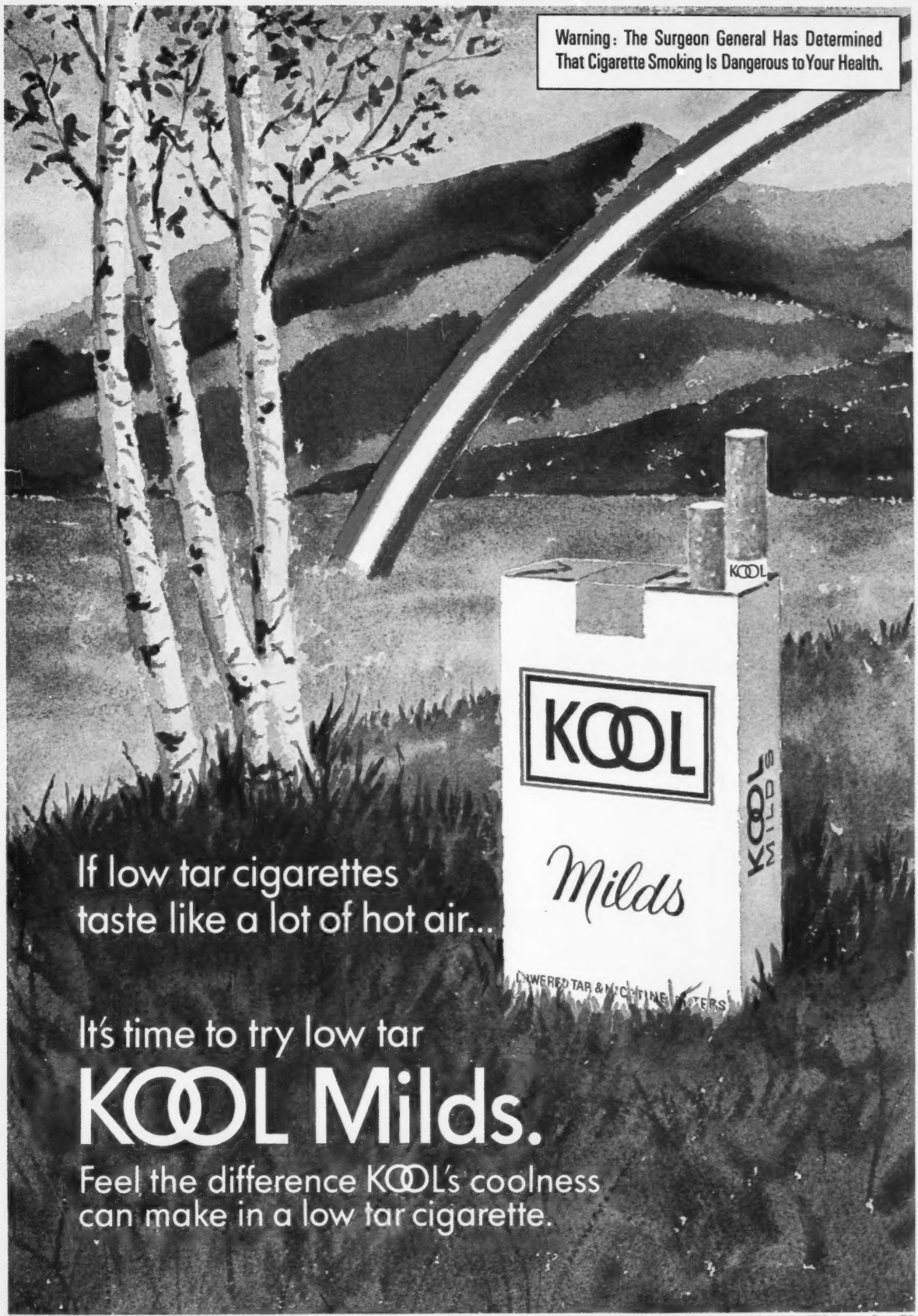
But nothing happened for me. I started feeling sorry for Sondra and Marshall, two more victims of spiritual faddism. I hoped they wouldn't take my failure personally. I imagined a conversation I'd have with Leonard, with me raving about their prowess and blaming myself for the lack of tangible results. Which led me to other thoughts, like my willingness to please everyone from my editor to my parents, regardless of my feelings, or what *I* felt. I'd had this insight before, but never in the isolation of a hot-water tub with a snorkel stuck in my mouth.

Maybe, for an instant there, underwater again, Sondra became Everyone I Please. But what seems more likely is that my quickening of breath this time was less the result of making any powerful and primal connection than it was the hellish heat on my lungs. I turned into one large, boiled hunk of meat. I moaned, turned pink and rolled over. In thirty seconds, I was lying on a doctor's examination table, with Sondra and Marshall hunkering over me, dripping.

They'd carried me downstairs from the Rebirth Room. Leonard was helping me "redirect" my breathing, but for me the session was over. Like a hypochondriac who's "cured" when the doctor writes a prescription, abandoning that tub had relieved most of my trauma. Outside, I knew, in the world that Thetans seem so anxious to leave behind, the grass would be more brilliantly green than usual, as if it had been painted by Antonioni. The unemployed hustlers at the corner gas station, fingerpopping to Al Green, would look as if they'd escaped from a photo-realist painting. It made no sense for me to stay inside the Theta House with these missionaries of rebirth when life—the thing itself—was just a pane of glass away.

"How was it for you?" friendly Leonard and happy Sondra wanted to know. And I wanted to tell them something good; they were so much more like the best of the sixties communards than the human-potential zombies I'd seen at est, etc., that only a monster would have dared to devastate them. "I think I flunked my rebirth," I said, "but I feel three pounds lighter. You really ought to advertise this as a terrific way for people to lose weight quickly."

They laughed. They thought I was kidding. But then they thought that, because rebirthing can be a painful experience, as traumatizing as birth itself, it must be a valuable growth technique. Leonard and Sondra were assuming, of course, that growth is the natural product of pain. But pain doesn't inevitably lead to growth; sometimes, it merely forecasts more pain. In which case, the lines now forming at your local rebirthing tub have less to do with self-improvement than they do with self-abasement. The Theta staff? Easily the most gentle and affectionate people now mass-marketing "the truth." But the Theta baptismal technique? For some things, we may safely say that once is enough. ●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Are film editors snipping directors out of the picture?

By Geraldine Fabrikant

Grace on the cutting room floor

Back in 1952, an independent producer named Stanley Kramer took one look at his first version of *High Noon* and *knew* he had a prairie dog on his hands. The first problem was Grace Kelly, the elegant Philadelphia socialite who stood there on the screen for what seemed like hours mouthing antiviolence platitudes till you wanted to go out and beat up a crippled newsy. Then there was the stupefying catacomb of subplots revolving around Sheriff Will Kane's futile efforts to find help in facing down the dread Frank Miller, due on the noon train. A friend stops by for lunch and winds up in the sack with a pretty Mexican maid, a deputy is jumped en route to the rescue, ad infinitum, ad tedium. Worst of all was the performance of the star, Coop himself, who strode so woodenly through the entire film that Kramer and his deputies thought maybe their hero had caught three bullets in the gut *before* Frank Miller hit town.

They weren't too far off. Cooper had undergone a hernia operation shortly before shooting began; he had a hard time cranking up even the carefully controlled emotion required of a basic Cooper performance. The one emotion that came through clearly, in the latter stages of filming, was pain: hernias hurt. Beyond that, director Fred Zinnemann was transfixed by Kelly's performance; film editor Elmo Williams was not. And there was no focus, no central controlling theme; what was the audience supposed to care about?

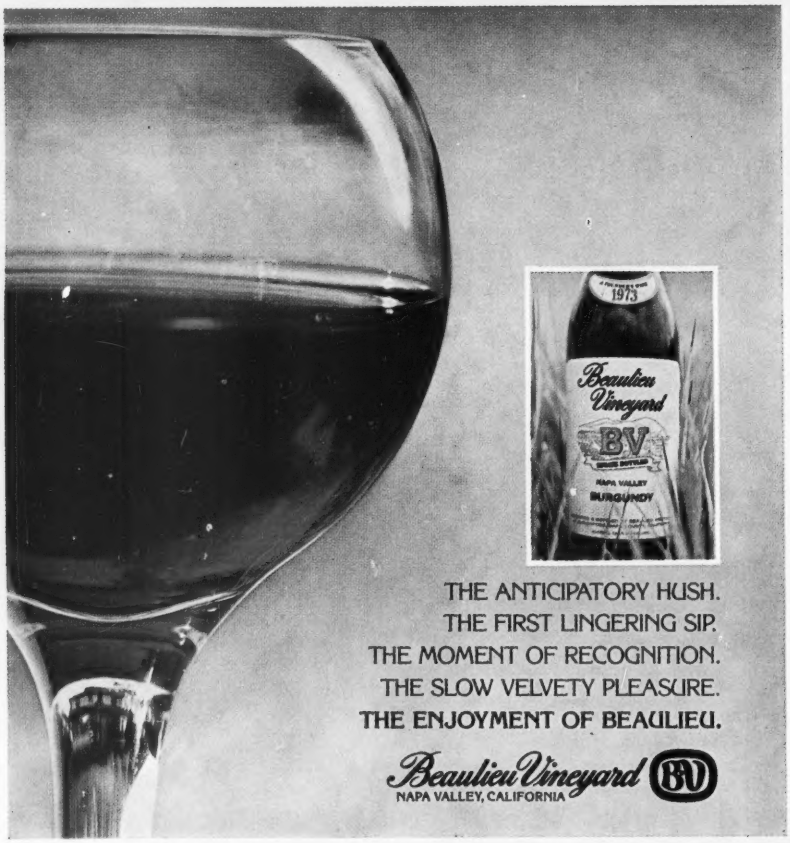
Williams wasn't sure himself, but he wasn't about to give up. Looking back on it, Williams says, "Cooper's performance wasn't his fault. He simply didn't feel well. It was also hard for him to keep the character development in mind when he assumed there would be several subplots. Cooper was right. While we were shooting, we still had no intention of creating a single sustained characterization."

In the cutting room, Williams rolled up his sleeves and went to work. First he sliced out all the subplots, focusing audience attention directly on Cooper's plight. Then he began paring down Kelly's role, snipping away frame after frame of Quaker proselytizing. This was, at last, to be a gunslinger tale; snivelers need not apply. But a melody of love lingered throughout the film, thanks to Williams' shrewd insertion of a constant companion for Cooper: the haunting Tex Ritter ballad, "High Noon."

As Kelly's role diminished under Williams' blade, the role of the wall clocks increased. "Once I started rearranging the continuity," Williams remembers, "the clocks kept jumping around in time—or, rather, out of it. I had to keep the audience from noticing. Since editors know that the eye follows gesture and brightness, I realized I was limited to shots with movement or light objects. I had to draw the audience's attention away from those clocks." But the niftiest trick of all was turning Cooper's hernia to the film's advantage. With uncanny deftness, Williams used anguished closeups of Cooper as the clocks moved inexorably toward high noon. Angst in the sun.

Williams, of course, had no idea if any of this would work. An editor never knows. It was also obvious that Kramer wasn't going to be easily persuaded; at a first screening, he talked nervously throughout the film's opening scene. Then, as Cooper began stalking the town in silent desperation, with the Ritter song enveloping the empty streets and sullen saloons like a Boot Hill shroud, Kramer grew quiet. And when Coop threw his badge in scorn at the feet of the craven townspeople and rode off with Grace

PHOTOGRAPH BY GEORGE M. COCHRAN



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into the sunset of the definitive American morality play, Kramer got up, walked over to Williams and shook his hand. They had made a *movie.*

In the 25 years since *High Noon*, editing has become such a delicate and complex art that the major newspaper and magazine critics have taken to praising—or sometimes damning—its practitioners and their impact on pictures. In one of the most famous reviews in the chronicles of contemporary film, Pauline Kael of the *New Yorker* termed Dede Allen's work in *Bonnie and Clyde* "the best editing in an American movie in a long time." On the other hand, producer Dino De Laurentiis was so critical of Robert Altman and his editors for their work on *Buffalo Bill and the Indians* that he fired Altman as director of *Ragtime* after Altman had already been on the project for a year.

Indeed, after years of anonymity, film editors (as well as cinematographers and scriptwriters) have become at least minor stars in the Hollywood firmament. Cutters with snappy track records, such as Allen (*Bonnie and Clyde, Serpico*), Sam O'Steen (*Chinatown, Virginia Woolf, The Graduate*) and Verna Fields (*The Last Picture Show, What's Up, Doc?*), are among the most sought-after talents in the business. Waiting lists for the top dozen editors stretch from the Polo Lounge to the Bel Air pool. Allen is always booked months in advance. Paramount chieftain Bob Evans nailed down Sam O'Steen a year in advance to cut Roman Polanski's *Chinatown*. John Schlesinger regularly consults with his top editor, Jim Clarke, before he actually starts to shoot. And several years ago directors Peter Bogdanovich, George Lucas and Steve Spielberg fashioned a 14-full-page tribute to Verna Fields in the February 14 issue of *Variety*: HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY MOTHER CUTTER.

Spielberg, for whom Fields cut *Jaws*, has said: "If I gave Verna a scene and mentioned three adjectives which I thought ought to characterize its mood, she would always include those three . . . and a fourth of her own, which made the scene work better."

In the early days, editors were considered—when they were considered at all—to be mere scissors-and-paste technicians. For all the boldness of his editorial strokes on *High Noon*, Elmo Williams was still working within the strictures of a Hollywood tradition built on hierarchial principles as rigid as those that supported the Chrysler Building.

Geraldine Fabrikant, a former film editor, is a New York-based freelance writer.

Under that system, developed and refined in the thirties and forties to give maximum power to the studio producer at the top, the film editor was the front-office man who reported to the producer. His credits appeared along with the hair stylists and wardrobe assistants. Even the directors—with the notable exceptions of giants like George Cukor and George Stevens and William Wyler—were little more than executive officers for men like Zanuck and Mayer and Thalberg. They deployed their legions like medieval princes, the objective being to churn out two categories of money-making films as fast as possible. The big budget A's, with name directors, top stars, lavish sets and 135,000 feet of film, allowed for four or five months of editing. The smaller budget B's called for 70,000 feet of film and about three months of editing.

Margaret Booth, at 79 the grande dame of Hollywood editors, learned her snipping and trimming under Irving Thalberg himself, and barely remembers the names of the directors whose pictures she cut. Her allegiance, she says, was "completely to Mr. Thalberg." Films were constructed upon the rock of straight long shots, with mediums and closeups for emphasis. Speed and efficiency, those were her watchwords. Editors were not artists, they were battlefield surgeons.

All that began to change in the late fifties with the arrival in America of the first of the New Wave French films: Alain Resnais' *Hiroshima Mon Amour* and Jean-Luc Godard's *Breathless*. Says Allen: "The French let Hollywood know that you could no longer get away with old parlor comedies and the standard catalog of shots. Hollywood began finding out that people wanted to go to new kinds of movies."

New kinds of movies meant new ideas, new techniques and flights of directorial fancy. The studio system was dead; long live the new king, the director (or, more loftily, the *auteur*). Innovation and experimentation always need cool heads and steady hands at the tiller; enter the exalted new court chamberlain, the editor.

Since then, the state of the art has come to require enormous technical expertise, but to Verna Fields, now an executive at Universal, and other editors that is scarcely the point. To her, technique is strictly a mechanical means to a lyrical end. "My real job," she says, "is to get inside a director's head, to ask questions and figure out what he's after—what his film is trying to say and how to help him say it."

MOVIE STAR NEWS

Shooting from the hip: In *High Noon*, editor Williams turned Cooper's hernia to the film's advantage, using anguished closeups of the pained actor

A director's vision is his own, naturally, but during the long, tedious months during which a film is being shaped and contoured, it is the editor who in effect directs the director. Says Arthur Penn (*Bonnie and Clyde, Little Big Man*): "In the end there may be thirty ways to cut a scene. A good editor keeps asking the pertinent questions you're afraid to ask yourself: 'What do you mean here? Is the action justified? What are you trying to say? What's your emphasis?' It's an invaluable contribution."

Indeed it is. In the context of modern filmmaking, with its rich variety of shooting techniques, angles and shifting points of view, the options left to the editor are practically limitless. Here, for example, is Dede Allen in a room carefully darkened against the California sun. The only light radiates from the tiny screen bearing a frozen closeup of Paul Newman. The film is *Slapshot*, George Roy Hill's elegy to an aging pro hockey star. Allen studies the shot closely, and frowns. She knows that audiences find Newman's visage irresistible, but she is still less than pleased with the shot. Finally she decides against the closeup. Instead, she selects a long shot of Newman slapping the puck up ice. With a grease pencil she makes a mark at the beginning and end of the shot she prefers, then lays it on a splicer. As pins hold the film in place, the splicer blade neatly cuts the frame she has marked. She then uses perforated Scotch tape to attach the long shot of Newman to the preceding shot: a closeup of Paul's opponent. (In the old days they actually melted the frames together, thus eliminating the frame currently out of favor from future consideration.) Allen runs the scene again; yes, that's better.

Shutting off her movieola, Allen settles back and reflects: "Cutting has a great deal to do with theater. It's basically the problem of organizing the structural performance that goes into a play. Staging, that's what editing is really concerned with. Once an editor has mastered the cumbersome technical tools, all he should really concentrate on is the performance in a scene and how it relates to scenes before and after it."

There's the creative rub: continuity of dramatic buildup. Williams could get away with a few wall clocks out of sync, but you cannot have a character, a personality, out of sync. The domino theory applies rigidly in film editing; the

PHOTOGRAPH BY ALIX JEFFRY

Splice of life: Film editors like Dede Allen (top) and Verna Fields, who worked with Spielberg on *Jaws* (bottom), are as sought after as top stars

selection of one scene may call for subtle and complicated changes in dozens of others. In a late scene in *Bonnie and Clyde*, for example, Clyde (Warren Beatty) learns that the press has blamed him for the murder of his brother. Director Penn had Beatty do the scene ten times. In the take Penn wanted to use, Clyde began to cry.

In the cutting room, Allen was faced with a scene in which a cold-blooded killer suddenly breaks down—and there was no room for easy, early-Cagney schmaltz here; it had to be *real*. So she had to go back into earlier scenes and begin to develop this unexpected dimension of vulnerability by using shots different from those previously selected. The audience would need clues to this new aspect of Clyde. As Allen puts it, "Obviously, if you're going to end a scene at a certain emotional pitch, you've got to build for it."

Just such editorial adjustments will spread throughout a film, until finally they reshape the atmosphere of the entire narrative. In the opening scene of *Bonnie*, Faye Dunaway saunters sexily over to the window and sees studly Warren below. When Penn and his editor saw the first rushes, they were galvanized by the electricity generated by their two stars. This was hot stuff, they realized, and it should *move* like hot stuff. They decided on a series of fast cuts, starting with Bonnie throwing on her clothes and racing downstairs to meet Clyde. Says Penn: "I had suspected that a fast rhythm might work for the film, but it's hard to predict when you're shooting. After we tried it successfully on that first scene, though, we really began to speed things up."

Adds Allen: "I recall having the feeling that I was breaking every rule, and that no one would understand what we were doing. But Arthur kept pushing me to speed up the film. Even after we'd finished cutting in New York and were on the Coast, I remember going over to the cutting room at Warners' and taking out three more minutes. I was pushing the film, and it worked. The picture had a special kind of excitement and force which really moved audiences."

Jack Warner hated the movie. Indignantly he told Beatty, "It's too violent. No one will like it. You haven't got any heroes." The film grossed, *sans* heroes, more than $28 million.

Bonnie and Clyde was a breakthrough film, charting new and provocative grounds in the psychosis of violence. It is a measure of the burgeoning role of the editor that several other landmark movies were also profoundly influenced in the cutting room. Take *The Graduate*, Mike Nichols' mordant essay on alienation in the sixties. Key scene: the seduction of angelic Benjamin by that alcoholic imp of suburban hell, Mrs. Robinson. To recap: Nichols has Anne Bancroft leave Dustin Hoffman in the hotel lounge with instructions to bring her purse up to her room. He complies and finds her on the bed, nude. Waiting. When Sam O'Steen first assembled the footage, he used shots of Mrs. Robinson almost exclusively. "She was the aggressive character with all the dialogue," he recalls. "It seemed natural to focus on her. But when I put the scene together, it looked terrible."

O'Steen recut. "Mike had shot for days, I had thousands of feet of film. There were shots from every angle. I cut for a week, at least 20 different versions.

"Finally we began to realize that Mrs. Robinson wasn't important. We all knew what she was thinking; she wanted Benjamin. *He* was the important character, to her—and to the audience. We had to show his reactions. The scene belonged to Benjamin. Audiences needed to see—and identify with—his insecurity. Otherwise they might have assumed his reactions were hipper and tougher.

"By the time we got to the final version," he says, "we had only three quick, almost subliminal cuts of Mrs. Robinson: her face, her breasts and her stomach." Thanks to O'Steen, Hoffman stole the scene—without uttering a single word.

Top-drawer actors like Hoffman and Jack Nicholson can cause problems

in the cutting room by dint of their very talent. Their stand-out performances, says Sam O'Steen, can lull an editor into destroying dramatic tension. As he puts it: "These guys are on top because they're skilled and work like hell. You can always depend on them for good performances. But that's just the problem. Cutting *Chinatown*, it was a constant temptation to stay on Nicholson. He was marvelous. But if I'd made him too strong, he would have overpowered Faye Dunaway. I would have thrown the whole film out of balance and misinterpreted Polanski's intentions."

If O'Steen and other top editors are spending more time in the cutting room sweating over such problems, it is because the directors for whom they work are capable of shooting extraordinary amounts of footage. For *Godfather II*, Francis Ford Coppola shot more than 600,000 feet of film (111 hours). Final cut: 18,000 feet. That's a hell of a lot even by today's prolific standards, but the fact remains that everyone is shooting more and more and *more* film. Says Milos Forman, "Today every director has to be innovative, even with camera angles. The demand on films to be believable is so much greater. A mediocre product will only satisfy a television audience. To go beyond that, to distinguish yourself and draw people into theaters, you have to do more imaginative work."

Imaginative work means no holds barred. Anything goes on the movie set these days, a fact of film life that makes the editor's job all the more important. Free-wheeling directors such as Robert Altman encourage actors to improvise their lines while shooting is underway. Thus, such loosely structured films as *M*A*S*H** and *Nashville* were virtually shaped in the editing room.

In the face of all this excess of excess, film editors are constantly called on to justify the timeless editorial dictum, "Less is better." And it often is. When Bob Fosse and editor David Bretherton finished the first cut of *Cabaret*, Joel Grey's role was almost as dominant as Michael York's. There were numerous backstage scenes in which Grey was the central character. But overexposure turned Grey's reptilian evil into wormy bromide. Bretherton began to remove these backstage performances one by one, replacing them with sharp, chilling, almost subliminal cuts of Grey throughout the film. In the editing room, Grey's performance was translated from a literal to a symbolic one. The result: an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor.

Similarly, in the case of *Lenny*,

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Fosse and editor Alan Heim found themselves uncomfortable with the ending. It just didn't work. As shot, it consisted of a series of short, impressionistic scenes after Bruce's trial—Lenny listening to his daughter sing, Lenny trying to open a jar of peanut butter—before he OD'd.

"After the screening," recalls Heim, "we all went over to the Seventh Avenue Deli and tried to figure out why we were so unhappy about the ending. The more we talked, the more we realized we had gotten too sentimental with Lenny. We raced back to the cutting room and began paring away the sentimentality: the peanut butter, the daughter, everything. Ultimately we went directly from the trial to Lenny dead on the floor. It was a tough ending—and a gamble. Luckily, it worked."

Walking the gossamer line between balance-sheet producers and art-for-art's-sake directors, betting the fate of a film on microscopic frame-by-frame decisions, major film editing is a high-stakes gamble every time. Don't worry about the editors, though. They get the picture. The best in the trade make up to $2,000 a week base (plus piles of overtime), and terms of the latest Motion Picture Editors Guild contract guarantee them a dandy 52 percent raise over the next three years, as well as screen credits on all feature films and TV movies. "Editing is the most expensive part of filmmaking," says Arthur Penn, "and the money-men can't even see what they're paying for. If they spend $1 million for 250 pounds of Brando, at least he's right up there in front of them in the flesh."

But if editing is intense and costly, at least it isn't a butcher-boy's job anymore. Listen to Alan Heim recall an important moment: "In one scene from *The Producers*, Gene Wilder and Zero Mostel go to visit playwright Kenny Mars, a professional Nazi with a huge picture of Hitler over his mantelpiece. In the first cut, mostly in long shot, the words were funny, but the audience wasn't laughing. Even though the picture of Hitler was supposed to be a takeoff on the George Washington portraits some homes have, it apparently was just a big turnoff. So we cut it out. Then we began speeding up the scene by using closeups, with one gag on the heels of another.

"Well, when we screened the scene again, the audience got hysterical," says Heim proudly. "I saw then that with the same material you could leave an audience cold, even hostile, or move it to tears of laughter. That's when I really came to appreciate—to love—film editing." ●

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Television

Married people

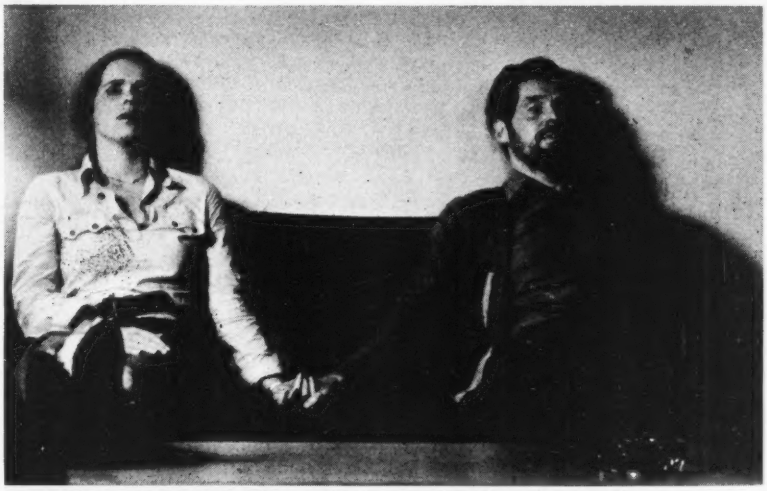
By Richard Corliss

Names: Johan and Marianne
Ages: 42 and 35
Nationality: Swedish
Class: Upper middle
Occupations: Psychology professor; divorce lawyer
Length of marriage: 10 years
Children: 2 girls
Communicable diseases: Affection, reserve, placidity
Scars: None visible
Prognosis: Questionable

In this age of art for the artist's sake there are still those occasional works that gain acceptance, not because we can see the mind of a genius behind them, but because we can see ourselves in them. Ingmar Bergman's **Scenes from a Marriage** (released here three years ago in a 168-minute version) had such an impact. It caught Bergman in a reflective mood—reflecting what was universal in himself instead of what was unique, and perhaps reflecting on his own five-year liaison with actress Liv Ullmann, which had recently ended. When the film was shown on Swedish television, in six segments of approximately 50 minutes each, it was the nation's highest-rated program—a blond *Roots*.

The film touched a similar chord when the shortened version (cut by Bergman himself) was released here the following year. By focusing relentlessly on a "typical" marriage—the small talk and big fights, the comforting quiet and tense silences, the repressions and convulsions, the yawns and stares, the white lies and white-hot truths, the compromises and ultimatums, the experience of living with or simply enduring another human being, and then living without—Bergman burned through the paper-thin sophistication of his characters and his audience to expose blood vessels of pain and hope. His microscope was also a stethoscope: he caught the heartbeat cadences of a generation of educated analysands for whom, in the words of Bishop Thomas Wilson, "Love is a talkative passion." You could talk about it all night, for years, maybe for a lifetime. And people talked about Johan and Marianne as if they were their best friends—or themselves.

Maybe now they'll talk twice as long. PBS is broadcasting the full *Scenes from a Marriage* (in New York on Wednesdays, beginning March 9, dubbed into English; and on Saturdays, beginning March 12, with English subtitles). Presentation in its original version underlines the program's formal affinities with the talking heads and middle-class longueurs of American soap opera. But something else is happening here. For a start, Bergman is no hack, churning out reams of repetitious dialogue to be milked by slick-haired actors between the Wisk commercials; and Erland Josephson and Liv Ullmann are not, say, Bill and Susan Hayes, the Gable and Lombard of *Days of Our Lives*. For another, the "scenes" cover ten years in the couple's life (with emphasis on the months before and after their separation), and record the gradual shifting in Johan's and Marianne's perceptions of themselves—from puffed up to dragged down to played out, to a final acceptance of life and their place in it.



Small talk and big fights: The continuing combustion of two souls

The first time we meet them (being interviewed for a woman's magazine), Marianne is very much seen as her husband's appendage—almost his appendix. Johan describes himself, with an irony that doesn't hide his ego, as "extremely intelligent, successful, youthful, well-balanced and sexy." Marianne, a lawyer who doesn't realize she is also a beautiful woman, can say only that "I'm married to Johan and have two daughters." She's embarrassed when the magazine photographer shouts, "Hold that pose!" It's not that she's self-conscious, but that she imagines herself as incapable of pretense. She'll learn.

A dinner party with their friends Peter (Jan Malmsjo) and Katarina (Bibi Andersson) clarifies our couple's compatibility—and their complacency. Peter and Katarina peck at each other's inadequacies like a pair of gamecocks ready to kill each other for a horrified/fascinated audience. Marianne is a bit shaken by the exhibition. She wonders if there isn't a lesson in it: "Do you think there is any way that two people can live together all their lives?" Johan's is the answer of many agreeably married men: marriage is an institution for the connubially insane, and no one should think he could live productively with someone for 40 or 50 years—*but*. "You and I are the exception that proves the rule. We've drawn the winning ticket in the big idiot lottery."

It's Johan who's moronic—or, in his own image, Byronic. He has reached that time in his marriage when, according to the sages (notably Clare Boothe in *The Women*), he's tired not of his wife but of himself. He wants to trade Old Johan in for a new model: the passionate young lover. He wants to connect with someone who'll bring out his poetic turbulence; not Marianne —she's preoccupied with the sema-

phore prose of recipes and guest lists. With the same scrupulous industry he devotes to his psychological research, he goes about having an affair (so?) and

falling in love (oh!). All that remains is to break the news to Marianne, with the apologetic, handwringing gestures of a boss who has to fire his friendly, competent secretary "due to circumstances beyond his control."

But it doesn't go well. Marianne is stunned, then wry, then sympathetic. It infuriates him, this need of hers to "share the experience," to cluck out her understanding, even to help pack his suitcase! A caged claustrophobe, he rages against their "very organized life. Sealed off, every crack filled, no exit. Lack of oxygen has suffocated us." After ten years of the kind of mutually determined orderliness that can make *and* break a relationship, Johan seizes the chance to be selfish and self-destructive, to prove he's alive by sticking pins in his handsome marriage, to move—in any direction, even off the precipice of his insecurities—propelled only by his flailing arms.

When Marianne asks him why he hasn't spoken of his bitterness before, he replies, "How can one talk about something which hasn't any words?" (But he's been talking eloquently for half an hour.) "How can one say that it's boring to make love although technically everything is perfect?" (But he's enjoying the *frisson* of shocking Marianne with these maybe-truths.) "How can I say that it's all I can do not to strike you when you sit there at the breakfast table all neat and tidy eating your boiled eggs?" (But he knows—and even she may realize—that he's hurting her largely for rhetorical effect.) Johan hates Marianne's tears and sympathy, hates her angelic concern. He wants anger and, a little, to be hated and judged. He wants her complicity in making him feel like a shit. Marianne responds with all the unconscious ploys of a wily masochist. She wants to talk it out; she wants to see a photo of the Other Woman ("Lovely breasts . . . Does she dye her hair?"); she asks about his extramarital sex life; she begs him to put off his departure; she makes fiery love to him; she packs his suitcase. Marianne, like most wives, is her husband's mother, friend, daughter, lover. And on Johan's last night at home, she's all these things in rapid succession—a flipcard book of women's roles for her man to glimpse before he goes under and out.

A talkative passion: Erland Josephson and Liv Ullmann in *Scenes*

The performances in this third episode are extraordinary (once Ullmann gets past the first few minutes, when she overdoes the adoring wife, with puppy-dog eyes, who doesn't know her husband has been unfaithful). The two actors are superb at incarnating the spectacle of two civilized people flirting with insanity. You can tell Johan is about to walk out on Marianne just by the way Josephson wears his sports jacket: it flatters him but is a *little* too tight—exactly what a middle-aged man who's not used to thinking about his body would choose to impress a young mistress. And you can see the literal weight of Johan's revelation sink on Ullmann's strong shoulders: her gait is more ponderous, and it carries a touch of the somnambulist who desperately wants to wake up. When, on the morning after, Marianne tries to restrain Johan from leaving, the muscles in the actress' arms manage to suggest a hysterical strength. Ullmann is unrivaled for conveying thoughts and feelings through her marvelous monochrome face with those luminous Technicolor blue eyes; but Josephson matches her in intelligence and passion, holding the characters and the entire series together. It's a privilege to watch them perform here, in a film that offers them more cohesive roles than Bergman wrote for them in the flashy, false *Face to Face*. They live in, and grow with, Johan and Marianne. We live and grow through them.

No Bergman film teems with funky, fortuitous life. After the first minute of the first episode of *Scenes from a Marriage*, we never see the couple's children. For all Johan's and Marianne's friends, the phone never rings except to advance the plot. And the Swedes I know don't go on at such lengths about the meaninglessness of the human condition; like most of us when we're in the dumps, they keep their anger or self-pity personal, not philosophical. But we shouldn't blame Bergman because he'll never make *The Bad News Bears*—not when he's made *Smiles of a Summer Night, The Seventh Seal, The Magician, Persona, Cries and Whispers* and *Scenes from a Marriage*. With this great and most accessible TV movie, he's taken Voltaire's cynical observation—that "Marriage is the only adventure open to the cowardly"—and used his art to show how life-and-death defying, how bloody adventurous, the continuing combustion of two souls can be.

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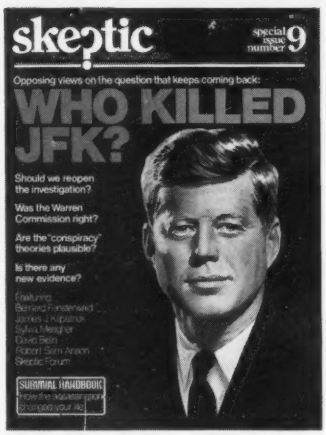

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NEW TIMES MAGAZINE 5155

Music

By Jim Miller

★★★ **Night Moves,** *Bob Seger* (Capitol); ★★★ **Hotel California,** *Eagles* (Asylum); ★★★ **Wings Over America** (Capitol); ★ **Leftoverture,** *Kansas* (Kirshner); ★ **A Day at the Races,** *Queen* (Elektra); ★ **Tejas,** *Z.Z. Top* (London). A survey of hit albums is always a salutary if sobering exercise. A recent glance at the Top 30 revealed *A Star is Born* atop the heap, with a handful of newcomers nestled among such hardy perennials as *Frampton Comes Alive!*

Queen, the British quartet, is represented by *A Day at the Races,* a tired rerun of their tested formula, blending intricate harmony, music hall high jinks, and noisome Led Zeppelin imitations. America's evergrowing silent majority will doubtless be struck dumb by Z.Z. Top's *Tejas* (listless boogie, I'm afraid), not to mention dazzled by Kansas' *Leftoverture* (aptly titled, since the music sounds like out-takes from Rick Wakeman's unreleased rock opera *Raskolnikov).*

All is not dress, however. Among recent albums, three listenable hits stand out. One is Paul McCartney's welcome betrayal of soft-core pap on *Wings Over America,* a hard set of rock from one of the form's original masters.

Even more satisfying is Bob Seger's *Night Moves.* Seger, an old pro who came up the rough way, finally enjoyed a hit last year, after ten years of trying. Popular acceptance has obviously inspired him, not to insipid self-imitation, but instead to self-reflection, specifically on growing old and acting young. His Silver Bullet Band plays with the passion of born-again rock and rollers snatched from the jaws of untimely retirement. Why forgo the fiction of eternal youth when you can still make it credible?

Born-again rock: Bob Seger (front right) and the Silver Bullet Band

The Eagles probably have a snappy answer to that question buried somewhere on *Hotel California,* a concept album about nothing less than the Decline and Fall of the American Dream, L.A. subdivision ("those restless hearts that never mend"). About half of this record is pompous drivel, but side one saves the day. It includes some swift picking on "Life in the Fast Lane"; an amusing title cut, in which the Eagles, disguised as a mild-mannered reggae band, denounce Babylonian decadence; and "New Kid in Town," a song that may well be the highest expression of lost love, bad form and blown cool since Ricky Nelson's "Stood Up." The vocal harmonies are bittersweet, the keyboard and guitar fills piquant: a pretty neat piece of popular rock and roll.

Books

The hurricane or the hurricane machine

By Geoffrey Wolff

Lancelot *by Walker Percy.* Farrar, Straus and Giroux (257 pp., $8.95).

Walker Percy's fourth novel is told from a New Orleans asylum, which its hero and narrator, Lancelot-known-as-Lance, calls a "nuthouse." Once, in college, this gentleman ran back a punt 110 yards; he was a Rhodes Scholar, married a woman who died, remarried, was a not very active civil rights activist during the sixties, indulged himself, drank too much. One day, quite by accident, he discovered that his daughter by his second wife, Margot, was not his daughter at all. He resolved to witness his wife's continuing infidelity, and succeeded. The rest is summarized in tabloid headlines: "BELLE ISLE BURNS. BODIES OF FILM STARS CHARRED BEYOND RECOGNITION. SCION OF OLD FAMILY CRAZED BY GRIEF AND RAGE. SUFFERS BURNS TRYING TO SAVE WIFE. . . . BELLE ISLE BURNS! DIRECTOR MURDERED AND MUTILATED! EX-GRID STAR HELD FOR QUESTIONING!"

This summary exposition does violence to the character of this fiction. The old family place, Belle Isle, like *Lancelot*'s plot, is a crumbling neo-Gothic edifice with turrets and dumbwaiters and hidden crannies. But Percy's purpose and manner are spare and direct, deeply serious, hostile to theatrics and entertainments. Belle Isle is a place visited by tourists willing to pay for bygone romance. To the narrator "Belle Isle looked like an isle."

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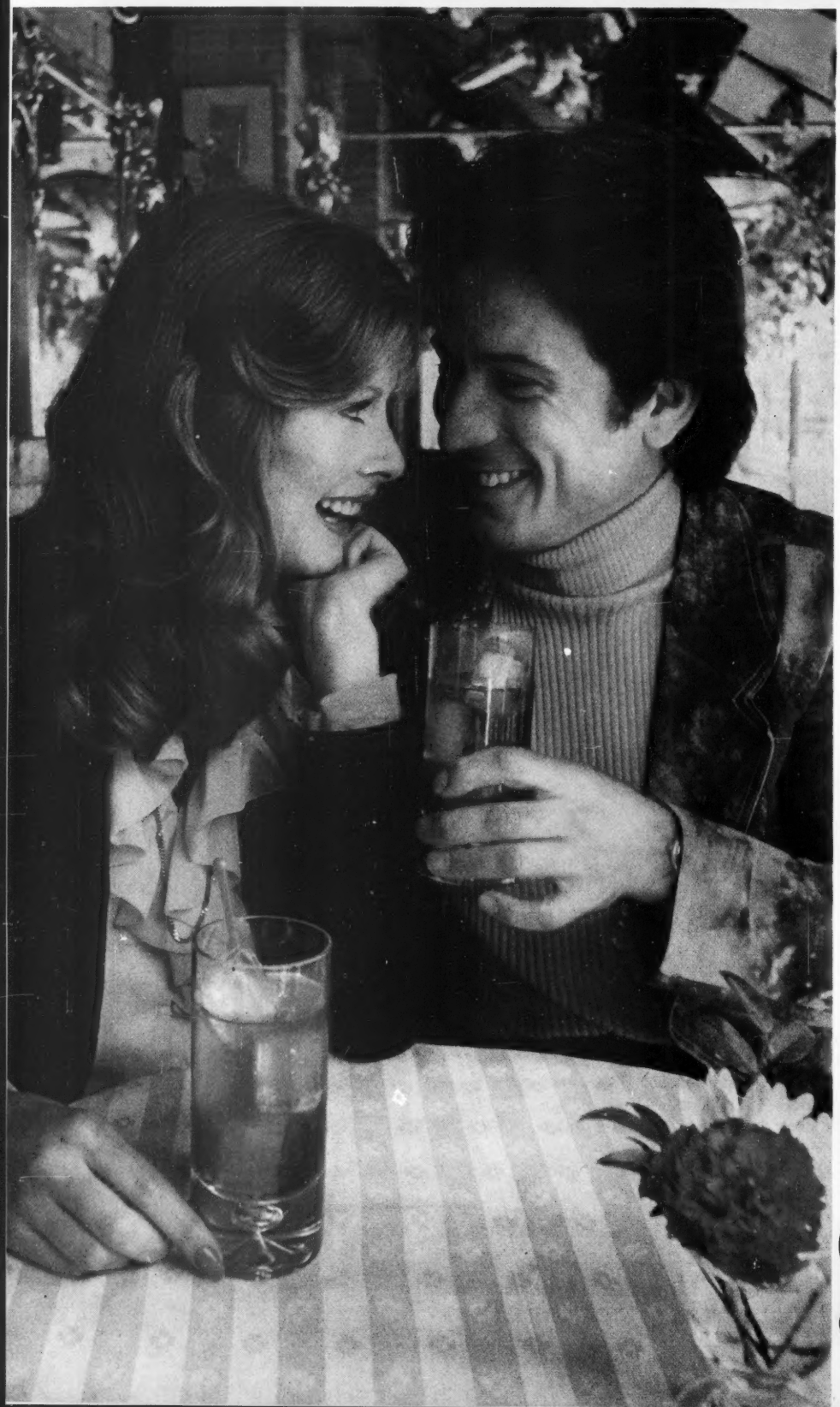

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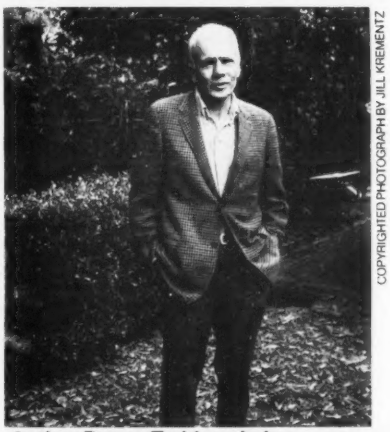
scourge of contemporary society, and *Lancelot* is in form a harangue delivered by the narrator to an old college friend, now a doctor and priest. As Lance takes inventory of the evils of this age—pornography, abstraction, indifference, incivility, passivity, solipsism, infidelity—he progresses from someone acted upon to an actor, an authority. He attains conviction, and as he looks from his cell to a movie poster advertising *The 69ers*, "man and woman yin-yanged, fellatioed, cunnilinged on the corner of Felicity and Annunciation Streets," he resolves to act against what it represents.

This resolution becomes a litany, subordinate to a kind of Mass: "I cannot tolerate this age. What is more, I won't. That was my discovery: that I didn't have to." Lance's situation is ironic, to be sure, but not in any vulgar way. He is to be perceived not as a madman spouting accidental truths, nor as the world's only sane man pent up by a world that would recrucify Christ if he came again upon it. Lance was mad, and is not; he will soon be released, and we know this, and so does he. (Unless, as I much doubt, he is a misled narrator, inadvertently misleading us.)



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Author Percy: To him, sin is reduction: of people to objects, of life to everydayness

Percy's ironies run deeper, are more consequential. Since his first novel, *The Moviegoer*, published when he was 46, this ex-doctor and self-proclaimed Roman Catholic has been writing fictions that reach for nothing short of a revelation of our grim modern situation. Not only have *The Last Gentleman* and *Love in the Ruins* (subtitled "The Adventures of a Bad Catholic at a Time Near the End of the World") made concrete a failure of spiritual particularity, they have proposed, by dramatic illustration, certain remedies for the diseases identified by Eliot in *The Waste Land* and before him by Sören Kierkegaard.

It is possible to read *Lancelot*, together with Percy's previous fictions, as a gloss upon Kierkegaard and Heidegger. It is possible, that is, to make of Percy's fictions a curious footnote to these men's speculations upon the nature of our attitude toward death and being, our mechanisms for evading despair, our deaths-in-life, our fear, our trembling, our cosmic vacuity.

It is possible to make such use of Percy, but neither useful nor satisfying. For Percy in his fictions, however persistent his preoccupation with such behavioral patterns as repetition and rotation, is a mature, serious novelist rather than a philosopher packaging his notions in make-believe. He is, however, a most unusual kind of novelist for his age and ours, one for whom stories are consequential. Some years ago Alfred Kazin wrote of *The Moviegoer* that it was "evidently and deeply the expression of some inner struggle. The author himself seemed in some fundamentals to feel himself in the wrong. . . ." Kazin did not suggest that the fiction extruded from this pressure was in any way petulant or sour, merely that it came from a felt need, had nothing to do with fictioneering as a career or a business, had nothing to do with entertainment.

Indeed, entertainment, in *Lancelot* and *The Moviegoer*, is perceived as a particular symptom of this continuing age of anxiety. *The Moviegoer* uses moving pictures as a kind of liturgical performance; the hero, Binx Bolling, as a passive celebrant, repeats in dark rooms an experience that merely simulates life. In *Lancelot* the making of movies moves the novel's plot. Lance's wife betrays Lance for a producer, and the producer for a movie director. She is a would-be movie actress, and a movie is being shot on Belle Isle. It is a particularly stupid and vulgar movie, with "a kind of Christ type" come to save a small town which then repudiates him. In this witless parody of salvation and crucifixion, Lance finds himself emerging as a kind of "character." As a hurricane bears down on Belle Isle, the hurricane in the movie is suggested by a hurricane machine: "The world had gone crazy, said the crazy man in his cell. What was nutty was that the movie folk were trafficking in illusions in a real world but the real world thought that its real-

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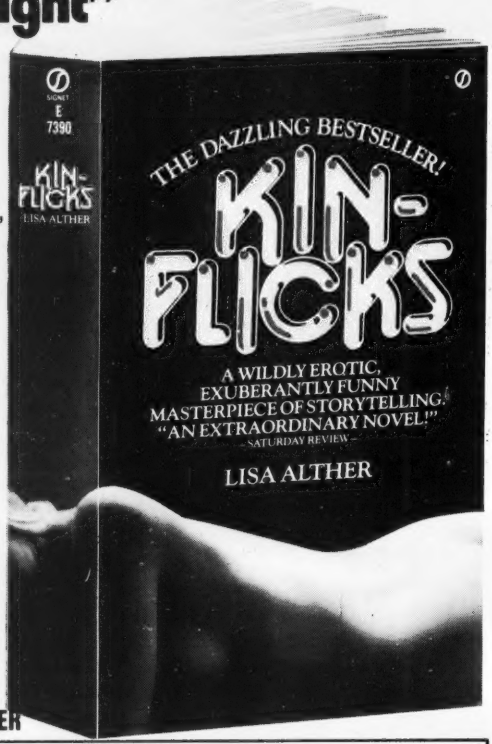

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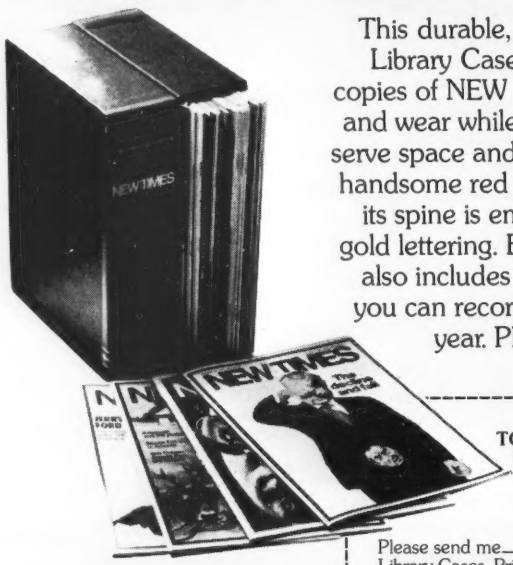

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ity could only be found in the illusions. Two sets of maniacs."

However casually this passage may be disguised, with its "nutty" and "movie folk," it is a symptom of Percy's occasional vice, an inclination toward the schematic, toward the kind of paradox that snaps shut like a lock. It is a setup for irony, as Lance's agonized apprehensions are not. He discovers the bastardy of his daughter because he notices that her blood type is neither his nor her mother's. He witnesses his wife betraying the man for whom she betrayed him on closed-circuit television, seeing her couplings as electronic bleeps on infrared film, overhearing her on voice-activated tape loops that reduce her human noises to magnetic imperfections. He abstracts the woman who has wronged him, and in Percy's theology the abstraction by one human being of another is the equivalent of a violation of the sanctity of a human heart, about which Hawthorne made such a fuss.

Sin is here perceived as reduction, the reduction of people to objects and of life to what Percy has elsewhere and often called "everydayness." By repetition, as though to answer a robot's program, Lance, till he came to crisis, watched the news, every day, every night. "What did I expect to happen?" he asks. And later he answers: "We were wondering who was going to get assassinated next. Sure enough, the next one did get killed." Well, yes: as Percy implies, the "next one" has always got killed.

But pilgrims, Lancelots after Holy Grails, bear up, and quest. The narrator speaks obsessively to his old friend, priest and physician, and speaks without the satisfaction of a reply till the final pages of his story. And then, to the deepest questions of existence, he receives only "yes . . . yes . . . no . . . yes . . . yes . . . yes . . . yes . . . yes . . . yes . . . yes. . . ." But these answers are hard-won, a display of decency and effort and tact. They are not abstract conclusions, the Q.E.D.'s of a conundrum. They are the conclusion of a particular, let us say singular, work of imagination. Lance is not Everyman, thank God; he is one character, southern, of his time, located in unexemplary circumstances. And his creator, resisting the tug of the bogus Universal in order to put before us a special case, has led us back to an authentic universal, and subverted the abstracting sins of the age his creation so abhors.

Food

Air fare/By Ruth Rosenbaum

Not everyone who gulps tranquilizers or counts rosary beads after take-off is afraid of flying. For many it's aerophagophobia—the fear of airline food. No matter what's printed on the menu—chopped beef steak, chicken croquettes or filet of flounder—aerophagophobes know what they'll get on their plates: Salisbury steak, Salisbury croquettes or Salisbury of flounder.

Because food has long been the most powerful weapon in the war to capture passengers, domestic airlines spend a billion dollars a year on their "gourmet feasts." As a National Airlines official comments, "Planes, pilots, ground services—there's not much difference from one airline to the next. We're left with food as just about the only means we have to distinguish ourselves."

The task of making each airline's food distinctive is entrusted to large catering outfits that prepare food at airport kitchens and to custom frozen food vendors who, at an airline's request, cater to the caterers. During the last seven or eight years, frozen food vendors have cornered an estimated 80 percent of the U.S. airline food business. Before that, although frozen vegetables, desserts and fruits were popular, precooked frozen entrees and meals were not.

At a large frozen food factory such as Mack Bros., Ltd., in Goshen, N.Y., about 400,000 entrees and composite meals (entree, vegetable, starch) are turned out weekly. "We spent two entire years developing our Salisbury steak, and I'd say now it's the finest Salisbury steak in the world," boasts co-owner Morton Mack. "We take it home to our families. They love it." With an item as good as the Salisbury steak, it's obvious that more than one airline would want to have its own. So Mack Bros. prepares a distinct sauce and a special blister-pack pop-out container for each airline's Salisbury.

On a tour of Mack Bros.' large production room, executive chef Joe Lhotka (who used to work for King Faisal) points out what looks like an amusement park ride for veal patties—they're conveyed over waterfalls of egg batter, under rollers of bread crumbs, on their way to be cooked, sauced and frozen. The most exciting challenge, Joe told me, is to take a great recipe meant to serve 10 or 12 people and transform it into a great recipe for 15,000 servings. "You see, the proportions just don't work out when you go that high," he says. "I have to go by gut feeling until every spice, every nuance, is the same as it would have been in the meal for 10 people."

Only recently has there been a need for artistry in airline food. In the thirties, when passenger service was just getting off the ground, the excitement of flying made everything seem glamorous—including the cold box lunches that the airlines bought from local restaurants. Because no one knew whether it was supposed to be hot or cold, fried chicken became the gourmet alternative to sandwiches. The first recorded case of aerophagophobia occurred in 1934, when a Chicago executive who had to fly every week on business complained to his doctor of dreams in which he was followed by fried chicken breasts and drumsticks.

It wasn't long before the first flight kitchens (United Airlines, 1936; Marriott Corp., 1937) made hot foods and variety possible. But the main attraction for passengers were new luxury planes, which featured sleeping berths, "drawing room" compartments and even private "honeymoon suites" at the front of the plane. As more people began to fly, the airlines had to replace these frills with extra seats. By the late fifties, the only space left for luxury was on the tray in front of each passenger.

"We all went hog wild trying to produce the fanciest, most expensive, expansive meals," a Pan Am vice-president says. Since meat was most popular with passengers, carriers became embroiled in fierce steak wars. One airline would launch a 6-ounce filet mignon in coach class, a second on the same route would have to escalate its fare to 7 ounces, and a third would raise to 7.5 ounces with mushroom caps. But no one ever surpassed the mid-fifties version of Western Airlines' Hunt Breakfast. As the flight attendant (in bowler hat and red weskit) began to serve eggs and three types of meat, a piercing bugle call sounded the hunting charge, followed by the heavy thunder of hoofbeats. (A tape recorder was hidden on the underside of the food cart.) Before other airlines could try to top this, the FAA grounded Western's horse and bugle corps for fear it might interfere with navigation instruments.

Occasional spoilsports complained that the gourmet touches were limited to the menus, that the "cappucino" and "chicken Kiev" turned out to be regular coffee and fried chicken. But for the most part the fanfare and pampering kept most people happy and the airlines were happy to keep it up. Only in the 1970s, after food-cost inflation, a fuel crisis and a recession, did airline officials acquire a disdain for such bacchic frivolity. "When are we going to stop playing Maxim's versus Romanoff's

ILLUSTRATION BY PATRICK CALKINS

and get back into the transportation business?" one executive grouched.

James J. Kellites (pronounced colitis), vice-president of Pan Am's Dining and Catering Services, told me they have tried to make cuts in food costs that won't hurt the passengers. Like the olives they used to serve in each salad—by leaving them out, Pan Am saves several thousand dollars a year. "And who really needed that julienne of pepper we used to throw in?"

But according to a vice-president at one of the largest catering companies, the cuts go much deeper. "On some flights a hot meal has been replaced by a sandwich, the sandwich by peanuts, the peanuts by nothing. And what you do get is less expensive—like peas and carrots or string beans instead of asparagus or cauliflower, Shasta instead of Coca-Cola, chicken and pasta instead of steak." According to four airline food industry officials, the worst offender is Eastern Airlines, which spends less on an entree than any other carrier. "They'll accept anything for a meal," a retired catering executive told me.

In 1974 Eastern Airlines wanted to talk with other airlines about a joint reduction in food services, but the Civil Aeronautics Board refused to allow it. So the cutbacks proceeded more gradually. Airline spies who once scouted their rivals' plates for new advances in haute cuisine now look for reductions that their companies can duplicate. U.S. airlines have driven their food expenditures way below their foreign competitors'. Caterers estimate that foreign airlines (usually backed by their governments) spend an average of $4–5 for a coach meal, $10–12 for first class, as opposed to the U.S. airlines' $1.50–2 coach average and $4–5 first-class average.

Most foreign airlines shun frozen foods, although they no longer broadcast that fact. They remember the brouhaha of 1959, touched off by an Air France ad in the *New York Times*. "Frozen foods? Impossible! Sooner starve. Or live on bread and water." That was part of the Air France message, topped by a picture of an enticing banquet table and the caption: "Nothing is frozen—except the ice cubes." After several complaints, calls and letters—one from an irate ad agency president who dared Air France's president to walk into American homes and see if he could tell the difference between fresh peas and frozen peas—Air France officially backed down. "Why, I myself have many packages of frozen food in my own freezer at home," an Air France executive sheepishly admitted in an interview.

Air France's retreat came a year after the Sandwich War of 1958, another defeat for foreign airlines. Shortly after the creation of a third passenger class, called economy or austerity service, airlines wondered how to feed their low-fare passengers on transatlantic flights. The new regulations permitted only cold, inexpensive sandwiches. So each airline involved began doing what came naturally. . .

For SAS a sandwich meant several slices of ox tongue, asparagus, lettuce and tomato, atop a slice of bread, or five slices of liver pâté, fresh crisp bacon, mushrooms and tomato on a slice of bread—in the style of their traditional smørrebrød. KLM, Air France and Swissair had similar ideas. Who could have expected them to respond to the word sandwich with a peanut-butter-and-jelly-on-Wonder? Pan Am did, and complained to the International Air Transport Association (IATA) that the Europeans were violating the spirit of austerity. Until the IATA reached a decision, U.S. airlines had to fortify their austerity fare. "We started putting a 12-ounce pork chop or a huge hunk of steak on a piece of bread, garnished with potatoes around the edges," one executive told me. But the IATA eventually upheld Pan Am's objection, threatening carriers that served deluxe sandwiches in austerity class with a $25,000 fine.

The first recorded case of aerophagophobia occurred in 1934, when a Chicago executive complained to his doctor of dreams in which he was being followed by fried chicken breasts and drumsticks

Behind the lines of litigation, airlines are conducting research on aerophagophobia, hoping to improve the negative image of their food. At United Airlines headquarters, near Chicago's O'Hare Airport, samples of frozen meals are flown in from most of United's flight kitchens every other Friday for thorough testing. Three brave members of the United dining staff, including the food service director Bob Arnold, ingest dangerously high levels of airline food, to make certain that at the level normally ingested by travelers, it does not cause aerophagophobia.

Invited to one of these Grande Bouffes, I decided to participate. First, airplane conditions were carefully simulated—the lighting in the room, the ovens, the source of power. Then the four of us tasted not only 64 entrees, each with vegetable and potatoes or rice, but also a surprise appetizer—17 platters of different kinds of vegetables with sauces (sent by a vendor who would like to become one of United's suppliers). When something is found to be aerophagophobogenic, United's staff calls the frozen food vendor within 24 hours so that production methods can be revised.

As other research tactics, airlines send scavenger patrols to forage in the dirty trays after a flight to see just what has been rejected, and fly their officials incognito to observe passengers' candid reactions. Over a period of time, they learn what passengers want and advise frozen food vendors and caterers to cook accordingly. For instance, vegetables destined for flights along the east coast are usually boiled to a mushy pulp, while those on transcontinental flights are left crisp.

One area of research that seems to have been neglected is closet aerophagophobia among airline employees. I have no clearcut evidence that it exists, and yet, there is this rather unsettling incident . . .

Asked to have lunch at a TWA flight kitchen with three food service executives (two from TWA and one from American Airlines), I was offered a choice of first-class roasts. But, since I knew I had to leave soon for another appointment, I opted for a quick Salisbury steak.

Sitting around the large table in the Ambassador Room, we were talking casually, munching on salad, when four Salisbury steaks with Cheddar cheese sauce, peas and a baked potato half were placed before us. Immediately the conversation picked up, the four of us jumping enthusiastically from one subject to the next. Twenty minutes later, there was finally a lull, and the four practically untouched Salisbury steaks could no longer be ignored.

"A cucumber sandwich is my idea of a lunch—I just can't eat a heavy meal at noon," said one TWA executive.

The other patted his stomach, and reached for more salad, saying, "Yep, I've got to keep this weight off . . ."

And the man from American Airlines, obviously uncomfortable, looked at his picked-at Salisbury as if he hadn't noticed it before, pulled it toward him and began to eat as eagerly as he could, nodding, "Not bad, not bad." After a few bites, he stopped.

As for me, I'm always on a diet. ●

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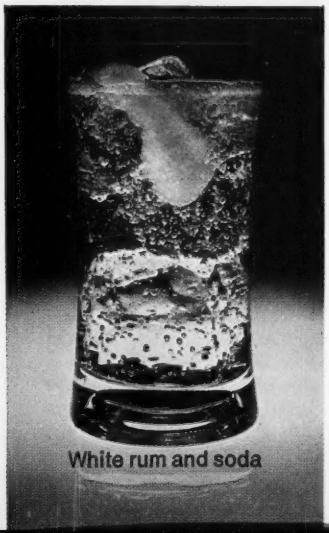

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Final Tribute

Jolly good show / By Mark Goodman

It is the spring of 1924 at 165 Eaton Place, Belgravia Square, London, and the autumn of life for Hudson, butler and bulwark of the Bellamy household. And, alas, a green young shoot has caused a crack in that stern Scottish foundation: Hudson is foolishly in love with—of all people—the parlor maid, Lily. There is consternation upstairs; downstairs is in a tizzy. The concern in the morning room mingles sincere compassion for Hudson with the aristocracy's equally sincere preoccupation with its own comforts. "It won't be the same without Hudson," grumbles Lord Bellamy, after that worthy turns in his notice. "Damn the man!" It takes the chimney corner wisdom of Cook, the formidable Mrs. Bridges, to remind her old friend of his role in the Empire: "It goes against what you've stood for all these years, all that's proper and respectable. Butlers in good houses don't go around with house maids on their days off!" But when the sun has finally set on Hudson's bright, fresh hopes for love, dear old Mrs. Bridges offers her eternal, alimentary solution to the woes of king, country and subject. "Just you stay here good and quiet, Angus," she says, "and I'll come back down and make you a nice, hot cup of tea."

Since that first day in 1904, when saucy little Sara scandalized the household by knocking at the front door (bold as brass, if you please) to seek employ as housemaid, *Upstairs, Downstairs* has reached across the sea of a Sunday night to delight us with the intricate interworkings of the Bellamy family and their servants. Upstairs, Lord Bellamy and his son James have each had a go at running the highly complex household, no beggarly feat at a time when the sceptered isle they were destined to govern is sinking swiftly into the silver sea. Downstairs, Hudson halloos into the newfangled phone as he and Mrs. Bridges and the spunky spinster Rose attempt—amid the rattle of Wedgwood and the tinkle of silver service and the pressing of evening wear—to provide physical comfort and moral reinforcement for the dying social order above.

Now, unhappily, *Upstairs, Downstairs* is approaching its 68th and final episode; the pleasure of its company will not be easily replaced.

Downstairs: History with truffles

Week after week, it has held up a bright gilt-edged mirror to turn-of-the-century England and let us view, as a shared intimacy, the repercussions of the Boer War, the introduction of the motor car, the early struggles of women's suffrage, anti-Semitism among the upper classes, the extravagant social and sexual follies of the Edwardian era and the ultimate death of its prodigal patron sinner. With the understated assistance of Alistair Cooke, we have watched a nation, borne aloft too long by myths and appearances, march off (to the skirl of pipes and a chorus of *Rule, Britannia*) to a disastrous war; watched well-meaning subjects of His Majesty, upstairs and downstairs, nurture the land's ancient illusion of war as holy crusade; watched the illusion shattered by the terrors that gripped titled major and footman corporal impartially. And through idle, restless James and his lovely cousin, Georgina, dancing in her shimmering chemise, we have watched the hollow remains of England's blasted youth, and seen the Wasteland.

And never, ever, has apocalypse been so ruddy entertaining! What could be more rewarding than lessons learned in the music hall, the drawing room, the illicit club, the country house bedchamber? In *Upstairs, Downstairs*, history was indeed served, stuffed with truffles. But we also heard a more resonant note, as if struck on an antique harp in a fading conservatory. As co-creator Jean Marsh (Rose) nicely put it at the show's outset: "It isn't just nostalgia for the 'good old days,' whatever they were, and the rigid, disciplined order of things. It goes beyond that, right back to the roots. Everyone is hooked on class distinction, whichever side of the tracks they come from. They may not admit it, but it's true. And the way we portray it in our costume dramas, well, we've got that extra touch of class, as well as history."

Oh, yes, we're well aware these days of just how hooked we are on our roots. The parallels are interesting, because in its own way *Upstairs, Downstairs* meant as much to Miss Marsh, a cockney, as *Roots* did to Alex Haley. And the rigid British caste system, shattered by World War I, has had as profound and malevolent an influence on our ancestral homeland as slavery and residual racism here in our own nation. No question but that it was important for *Roots* to prick us, to galvanize our sensibilities; unfortunately, it did so with the whip and the cattle prod: the weapons of its very villains. Mr. Haley is a man of obvious integrity, but our schlock merchants got their hock hands on his life's work and transformed it into banalities and bromides, the better to beat us over our honky heads with.

Roots was history, without class; it's disgraceful that the most tumultuous issue in our nation's chronicle had to be presented with the same dramatic skill and intellectual subtlety we bring to *Starsky and Hutch* and *Charlie's Angels*. Anyway, this is one honky who is going to pass next year, when Sammy Davis Jr. stars in *Roots Goes To Harvard*, or whatever. I'll be curled up in a Queen Anne chair in the corner, yearning for a nice, hot cup of tea from Mrs. Bridges.●

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